

Young Sussex Nursery (Portland Road)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	130733
Inspection date	11 March 2008
Inspector	Shan Gwendoline Jones / Jill Steer
Setting Address	165 Portland Road, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 5QJ
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Registered person	Ingrid Boyd
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?

Young Sussex Nursery is one of a chain of privately owned nurseries. It opened in 1992 and operates from a former infant school in Hove, East Sussex. A maximum of 88 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open from 08:00 until 18:00 each week day, all year round, except bank holidays. Children attend for a variety of sessions. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 153 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these 53 children receive funding for nursery education.

The nursery employs 23 staff, 21 of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two trainees are working towards a qualification. The setting employs a qualified teacher for all three sites and they receive support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The nursery is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and the National Day Nurseries Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning to take responsibility for their own personal hygiene, through good hygiene practices that are part of their daily routine. Older children confidently use the bathroom independently, washing and drying their hands, after using the toilet, before eating and after creative activities. Younger children are helped and supported by staff in increasing their independence as child size sinks are located in the rooms. A sick child policy, accident and medication procedures and practitioners up-to-date first aid training means that they can act in the best interest of children should they become ill or have a serious accident.

Children learn about healthy eating through topics, posters and access to a variety of healthy snacks such as fruit. Topic work effectively encourages children to think about foods sensibly. For example, a recent topic focuses on the traffic light system used by some supermarkets of putting foods into red, amber and green groups. Children are able to explain which foods are in each group, and understand that the green foods which you can have a lot of are good for your body.

Some children bring in a packed lunch, parents are encouraged to include a well balanced nutritious selection of food. Parents also have the option for their children to have a hot meal which is brought in by an outside catering company. A sample from the varied menu includes; turkey and root vegetable stew, dumplings with apple and rhubarb crumble and custard. Staff are well informed of children's dietary needs and requirements, and are very pro-active in ensuring these needs are met effectively. Older children are able to access fresh drinking water freely during the day and younger children have their individual named beakers close to hand, helping them to learn the importance of keeping their bodies hydrated.

Children use a range of large and small equipment with developing confidence and competence. Some can cut with scissors and others are given support from staff when required to hold the paper whilst they practise cutting. All children enjoy fresh air and exercise daily and make good progress in their physical development. Most of the children have opportunities to free flow from inside to out as they choose, whenever weather permits. Children move spontaneously with increasing control and co-ordination. They run, balance, jump, climb, push and pull, lift, carry and throw. These experiences give a sense of well-being, develop body awareness and contribute to the children's growing feelings of who they are. This greatly promotes their physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery is a welcoming environment for children, parents and visitors, because staff greet them upon arrival and are friendly in their interactions. Much consideration has been given to promoting a secure sense of belonging for the children as attractive displays of children's work posters and photographs are displayed throughout the nursery. Children are able to move around comfortably and access a wide range of activities safely. However, at times the temperature in all of the rooms is not consistently monitored to ensure they are maintained at an adequate temperature.

Staff are extremely vigilant and ensure there is always a high ratio of adults to the number of children to allow them to be supervised effectively at all times. Very good security arrangements are in place to safeguard children, which include written procedures for answering the door and use of a visitors' book. The use of detailed risk assessments ensure activities, premises and equipment are checked for safety and necessary steps are taken to reduce any identified risks.

Senior staff take a lead role for child protection and there is a comprehensive procedure in place to follow. Staff are knowledgeable about the signs and symptoms of abuse and have clear systems in place to deal with any concerns. Child protection training is a key course undertaken by staff to ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities to safeguard all children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Younger children benefit tremendously from staff's knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework. They are cared for by a caring and loving staff team. Children are supported extremely well by staff to help them settle into routines. They are given help and encouragement as they participate in activities.

Children have a good attitude to learning and are happy, settled and purposefully engaged throughout the day. The rooms are organised according to the children's age and stage of ability. However, on occasions, effective use is not made of all the available rooms to best meet children's individual developmental needs. For example, on a very wet day when outdoor play is restricted, a vacant playroom continues to remain unused.

Children respond well because there is a structure and they know what to expect, this is particularly beneficial to new children who are settling or those transferring to another room. As a result children generally settle quickly and become engaged in an appropriate activity. Babies are happy and secure and staff ensure that both baby and parent are comfortable in the nursery by organising individual settling-in periods. Babies and toddlers follow their own routine and the key-worker plans the activities and play equipment most suited to their stage of development. Babies relish opportunities for messy play and laugh with delight as they explore the 'rice crispies' which are provided in a large tray as a sensory activity.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and support children's progress through the stepping stones. They plan and provide a wide range of meaningful topics and experiences which interest children and which cover all areas of learning. Children confidently approach staff to talk to them and ask for help when needed, such as dressing the Barbie doll. Children enjoy getting fully involved in themed activities which are very well planned and presented with positive learning intentions and which arouse their natural curiosity. For example, they colour in flower pots, put in some compost followed by a carefully chosen sunflower seed then cover it with more compost. Children's learning and understanding is then consolidated by using their imagination to become a seed themselves. Curled up on the ground until they are watered and begin to grow, a member of staff talks them through the growth process and children call out that they need sunshine and more water to grow and not wilt, as they gradually stand up and become fully grown plants.

Observations inform staff of children's achievements. However, these observations are not regularly entered into the children's development records to identify their individual progress

and ensure the planning includes suitable challenge for all children to progress steadily through the stepping stones. Throughout the day children are focused and engaged in play. Staff are clear about their roles and engage children in the wide range of activities available.

Children have warm and friendly relationships with both staff and each other, which gives them the confidence to ask questions in order to develop their thinking. They demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning and are curious and eager to explore the environment.

The computer is very popular, children are competent at opening and closing their chosen game, familiar with what each one offers. Children are beginning to understand time as they turn over the timer and know that it is then someone else's turn on the computer. They look at the sequence of pictures to tell them what will happen during the day and they share details of events in their own lives. Children count confidently in a variety of situations during everyday activities. They count sufficient trowels for each child to dig with and sing number rhymes.

Children's creativity is encouraged through role play and craft activities. However, some focus activities are too adult led. For example, children making cards for St Patrick's day simply stick pre-cut shamrocks on to cards and over write the text inside. Many other opportunities exist for children to practise mark making, such as in the well used writing area. Children make good use of this space, helping themselves to paper, pencils and stencils to draw and practise writing. Many children can write their names and communication is enhanced as staff regularly use Makaton signing as they speak.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children demonstrate a sense of belonging as they share their experiences about their own lives and families. They are introduced to other cultural traditions than their own through topic work, which helps to develop a positive attitude and respect for others. The selection of resources available, such as books, puzzles and small world figures, provides children with a positive view of a variety of people in everyday situations. Children explore aspects of different lifestyles and countries. For example, photos of the children and staff displayed on a world map depict the places they have visited. Children are treated with respect, helping them to feel good about themselves and become confident young people. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The nursery has clear procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who have English as an additional language. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has attended training and has a detailed knowledge of her role and responsibilities.

Children's behaviour is very good. Practitioners use positive behaviour management techniques and provide good role models. Subsequently children are valued and encouraged as individuals to contribute in group situations and are praised when they do something well. They know to share and to take turns, they are friendly, listening to each other, considering each others' feelings and sharing resources amicably.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents speak well of the nursery and most choose it for their children through personal recommendations. The highly effective settling in procedure ensures that children and their parents can experience the nursery in full at first hand over a gradual period. Staff keep parents informed about their children's progress through daily discussions and regular parent information evenings when parents look at their children's

developmental records. All children are valued as individuals and their needs are understood using the information gathered from parents. Weekly and daily planning is clearly displayed which enables parents to become actively involved in their children's learning. Children benefit from friendly informal relationships between staff and parents, which is enhanced by the effective implementation of the key worker system. Policies and procedures are shared with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the very committed, and established staff team who show obvious pleasure in being with the children. The entire staff team are devoted and strongly committed to the improvement of care and education of all children. Children benefit from the experience and qualifications of the staff team, as the staff have a clear understanding of the children's individual needs.

All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is regularly reviewed. Policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the well-being of the children. They are shared with parents to keep them well informed about the service provided and their child's activities.

Leadership and management is good. Management has a high regard for the staff team. They work well together and clear communication and guidance allows them to provide a stimulating, well-balanced programme. Individual staff training needs are identified, with staff attending a range of courses to ensure they can fulfil their individual roles. This ensures competencies are developed in all areas for the most effective outcome and benefit to children's learning. Management evaluate the service provided and there is a strong commitment to creating a rich learning environment for children. All staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and contribute to the curriculum planning, providing a comprehensive timetable of play based learning.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to replace old and worn toys and play resources. The setting carries out risk assessments to monitor the suitability of toys and resources to ensure they are suitable; any worn or unsuitable items are either replaced or discarded.

At the last nursery education inspection two recommendations were set to provide more opportunities for older children to explore a sense of time and provide parents with written information on the early learning themes.

Staff place greater emphasis on developing children's understanding of time. For example, egg timers are used to monitor how long the children have left to play on the computer or to ride on a bike. During every day routines staff remind children how many minutes they have left to play prior to tidying away the toys and resources, giving them a sense of time.

Parents receive regular information about the running of the nursery, how children learn and of planned events. All the planning is clearly displayed so they can see what the children will be doing on a daily basis, enabling them to take an active role in their learning. Leaflets are

available in the foyer for parents regarding the Foundation stage curriculum and the Birth to three matters framework.

All the improvements have had a beneficial effect on children's development, the quality of care provided and the partnership with parents.

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 complaint 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):

- review the organisation of the play rooms to utilise the space more effectively to meet children's individual development needs. (applies to nursery education also)
- ensure that appropriate temperatures are maintained throughout the year so the children are comfortable

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):

- plan what children might learn from activities and what challenges there will be for more able children in order to ensure children benefit from the full potential of what is provided
- regularly update children's individual development records and use this information to plan the next steps in children's learning

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