

Sceptre Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	309646
Inspection date	10 December 2007
Inspector	Ann Bamford
Setting Address	Sceptre Way, Bamber Bridge, Preston, Lancashire, PR5 6AW
Telephone number	01772 694747
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Registered person	Sceptre Nursery Ltd
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?

Sceptre Day Nursery has been registered since July 1996. It is situated in an office complex area in Walton Summit near to Bamber Bridge on the outskirts of Preston. It is mainly a commercial and business area with some residential properties. It provides full day care in the main for the work force of the company although children can also attend from the local and wider communities.

The provision is all on ground level and is of open plan design. Facilities comprise , a baby room with separate changing and sleep rooms and a large playroom for children age two to four years. There is also an office, kitchen and staff facilities with an adjacent outdoor area situated to the rear of the building.

The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 17.45 apart from Bank Holidays and for one week at Christmas. Children attend for a variety of sessions. At the time of inspection there were 28 children on roll, of whom 13 were in receipt of nursery education funding. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The staff team of seven are all qualified or relevantly trained, each with current first aid training and food hygiene certificates. The setting employs a cook. The manager works alongside her staff team for significant parts of the day.

Continued training and development is encouraged and the nursery gained the Investors in People award in 2001. The setting receives support from the Early Years Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The setting is very clean and has highly effective processes in place to ensure that this remains so. Children are actively involved in routines. They are developing excellent skills in keeping the environment clean as they clean up after snack time. Staff pass their sound knowledge of good hygiene practice onto children in words of encouragement and praise. This increases children's self confidence to do the job well.

Children's continued good health is significantly enhanced as the setting works very effectively to find out about children's individual health needs from parents. The individual plans for helping children with allergies or asthma are very creative and supportive of children's individual needs. Staff know children very well and are sensitive to even small changes in children's behaviour as being a signal of emerging illness. This really enhances individualised care.

There are policies and procedure in place to ensure that staff have appropriate and current training on first aid and administration of specific medication. Staff knowledge of health issues such as childhood asthma and other illnesses contribute to the settings overall commitment to ensuring that children have enhanced good health.

Children are nourished very effectively as the staff make excellent use of snack time to encourage children to eat healthily. Children have access to five portions of fruit per day and they really enjoy the range available to them. All children eat the fruit provided. Children are developing a really good awareness of healthy bodies as they talk about germs, and how both good food and exercise affects their bodies.

Children enjoy physical activity as they pedal, balance, hop and kick using bikes, large equipment and footballs. They work effectively and collaboratively to use large bikes along a pathway which requires balance and manipulative skills. Children have regular use of the outdoor environment, even in inclement weather as staff are pro active in ensuring children have appropriate clothing to go outdoors in all weathers. This enhances meeting individual children's needs in relation to exercise. Children can rest or sleep in line with their individual needs as they snuggle up on cushions or use the book area to sit quietly. Babies and toddlers have sleep in line with their individual needs as they use the designated sleep room.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe in the setting. There are robust procedures in place to ensure that this remains so. Policies and procedures for ensuring that adults who have access to children are suitable, are followed with attention to detail.

Staff are highly competent at risk assessment and their confidence to explain clearly what they are doing to children enhances children's safety significantly. Children are developing a sophisticated ability to keep themselves and others safe in the centre as they tidy away equipment, clear up spilt sand and go and describe how they would act in the event of a fire. All children are developing confidence to identify risks and the ability to take steps to reduce them with increasing independence.

The setting has developed an effective use of support systems of ancillary and maintenance workers to enhance the safety of children. The day to day cleaning and maintenance of the building is effective and timely as a damaged boiler or blocked drain is attended to immediately.

Children confidently use a wide range of suitable and safe equipment as staff plan the layout of the rooms carefully to allow children to move freely. Babies play in their very safe area but enjoy looking out on the older children's area. Staff's constant attention to the safety of the rooms and equipment ensures that children remain entirely safe when engaged in play outdoors and indoors. Older children teach younger children how to keep themselves safe in a delightfully caring and knowledgeable manner. For example, they hold hands and tell each other to put their feet down carefully to make a large bike move faster or support each other walking across the concrete walkway describing what they are doing to stay safe.

Children are very well protected by staff's deeply embedded knowledge and understanding of their role in safeguarding children. This is enhanced further by all members of staff's strong knowledge of the procedure and confidence to act in the event of a concern about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children develop confidence and self-esteem as they choose their own activities. Babies and toddlers have access to a wide range of appropriate toys and activities. The setting plans to encourage children to do things for themselves. They are encouraged to register themselves and select their own activity before being assembled for circle time. Children know the routine and develop the confidence to operate successfully in it with decreasing support from adults. Children's success at doing this enhances their skills as competent learners as they organise themselves.

Children are purposefully engaged in activity throughout the whole of their time spent in the setting. Staff organise the environment and equipment in a way which allows children to take responsibility for their learning. All equipment is stored in a way that can be accessed by children allowing them to change activities or equipment as they wish.

Staff involve children fully in the setting. Children are actively encouraged to have an input into planning what topics will be covered, what equipment will be needed and how each session will be ordered. As a result of this children 'own' the environment and are active in ensuring that the room and equipment are treated with care.

Staff in all areas of the nursery use 'Birth to three matters' and the Foundation Stage curriculum well in order to plan activities for children. They observe what children are doing and usually use their observations to plan individual next steps for children. However, this is not fully consistent across the nursery. Some children make rapid progress because staff are skilled in setting appropriate next steps and check that children are developing skills on a regular basis. However, this is not yet fully consistent and impedes the rate at which some children develop.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a strong understanding of the Foundation Stage and are using their knowledge to further develop each other. Comprehensive planning, which covers all areas of learning, is generally linked to children's next steps in their learning. Differentiation is routinely planned in to provide additional challenge to individual children as well as excitement to the group. Assessments of children's learning securely derive from observations of children's achievements linked to the stepping stones of progress. There are strong records to support this. The planning of the environment and use of some innovative organisation assists teaching and children's learning, making every area accessible and meaningful to children. For example, all equipment in the setting is stored at child height meaning children can choose equipment they think will contribute to topics.

Children are becoming confident communicators and readily ask questions of visitors. Many are beginning to ascribe meaning to marks and listen to stories with interest and understanding. Their creativity is developing well as they join in songs, or use a book to spontaneously recreate part of their forthcoming nursery play. They use musical instruments to enhance their play. They use imagination along a theme for example, playing out the Christmas story and using imaginary costumes such as stars. All children are happy and settled in the centre, they separate well from parents or carers. They are developing friendships. Children are developing the concept of numbers being less or more than as they put out plates and cups at snack time. They match shapes to individual children's mats with confidence and skill. They are starting to use positional language in their play and can tell which child is the biggest and smallest with accuracy. Children show natural curiosity and begin to use tools such as pencil sharpeners for a purpose. All children can use the computer to control the mouse, many children can use simple programmes unaided. Children are developing an understanding of the world around them as they observe the lorries on the motorway and discuss what they may be transporting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children and their parents receive a very warm welcome into the nursery. They have a clear sense of belonging as they identify their own shape and peg on which to hang their coat. Staff in the setting work hard to encourage children to do things for themselves, they ensure that aprons are easily accessible, that coats are put on before help is given with zips and that children put on their own shoes. Children have access to a wide range of opportunities, which encourages their understanding of diversity, for example, play with multi-cultural dolls and clothes, kitchen utensils, books and jigsaws. Many planned activities are provided linked to celebration of festivals such as Hannuka, Eid, Diwali or Christmas.

There is a robust policy for meeting additional need. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are treated as individuals. Staff are competent to pick up when children are experiencing difficulties and confident to discuss this with parents and actively support parents in obtaining help when needed. Staff attend training regularly to ensure that they have knowledge and understanding of how to meet individual needs as they arise.

Children behave very well. They are developing strong strategies for making friendships taking turns and settling disputes as staff are excellent role models who regularly talk about being kind to each other and their own feelings. Children are given skilful individual support to succeed in situations that they find difficult, such as circle time. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are welcomed into the setting on every level. There is a range of good quality information that is offered to parents in a variety of ways. Information on how care and education is provided is of a high standard and is given to parents in written form as well as by talking directly to them. All policies and procedures are available at all times and the format for complaints is transparent and available for any parent to look at any time. Parents are involved in their child's learning in the setting as they use arrival and departure times to tell staff what children have been doing at home and how outings at weekends have linked in with what is happening at nursery. Parents speak highly of the settings provision of care and education to their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Effective recruitment procedures mean that safe, suitable practitioners work with the children. The records relating to this are generally stored in a way which supports safe care. However, staff records are not all stored in the setting which impedes fully safe care of children as details of recruitment of safe staff are not easily accessible.

The qualified staff team make good use of opportunities for continuous professional development which enhances children's care and learning. For example, staff have attended induction training and training in relation to the Foundation Stage curriculum, sign language and safeguarding children. Training is planned to ensure that any requiring updating, such as first aid, is done in a timely fashion. Staff are very well deployed according to their skills and experience. Records in the setting support safe care of children. They were all current and available for inspection. There are effective procedures in place for sharing records with parents.

Leadership and management is good. A strong leadership team with defined roles and responsibilities has effectively supported staff and children. The setting has good systems for managing difficulties before they have an impact on children, for example, an enhanced staffing level is in the setting in order to cover any difficulties. Staff are well supported through both formal and informal meetings. The clear focus of these ensure that staff develop enhanced skills in helping children make effective progress in each area of development. There is a clear vision for the future, which is deep rooted in the setting's commitment to successful integrated working and to developing quality practice. The manager has a clear understanding of the setting's strengths and areas for future improvement.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was requested to make information technology resources more readily available to children, review the induction programme for staff, the observation system for children and the child protection statement and obtain written consent to obtain any necessary medical advice or treatment for children. Since that time, the setting has obtained and developed children's independent use of technology equipment, revised the observation and assessment system for children to incorporate 'Birth to three matters' and The Foundation Stage curriculum and has developed clear procedures for safeguarding children which are understood by staff. In addition, the setting has developed an induction programme which is now used with all new staff and students. Parental permission to seek any necessary medical advice is consistently obtained before children are left in the setting. Each of these actions has improved the quality of care for children in the setting.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection a concern was raised relating to the conditions of registration under National Standard one, age of children attending. Ofsted wrote to the provider and asked for a written response to the concern. We are satisfied that the registered person has taken appropriate steps to address the concern. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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

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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):

- continue to develop the consistency of setting individual next steps for children (this also applies to nursery education)
- continue to develop to develop the process for keeping records to ensure the safe management of the provision.

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):

- make improvements as indicated in the care section above.

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