

# Silver Birches Nursery School Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 503755  |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 27 March 2008   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Janet, Elizabeth Singleton                            |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | Longsands Lane, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire, PR2 9PS |
| <b>Telephone number</b>        | 01772 798 034   |
| <b>E-mail</b>                  |   |
| <b>Registered person</b>       | Silver Birches Nursery School Ltd                     |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated  |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | 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](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 satisfactory. 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?

Silver Birches Day Nursery is a privately run nursery and opened approximately 18 years ago. It operates from 10 rooms in detached, purposely converted property in Fulwood, Preston. Silver Birches serves the local area. A maximum of 99 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery opens each weekday all year round and sessions are from 07.00 until 18.00. There is a secure outdoor play area providing opportunities for physical play.

There are currently 69 children from birth to under eight years on roll, with a further 15 children attending the out of school facility. Of these, 32 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are 18 full time staff who work with the children. There are trainees also. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from the teacher team.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children remain healthy because the staff follow sound hygiene practices, for example, tables are wiped before and after meals. Children are encouraged to wash their hands after attending to their personal needs. However, the bathroom was not checked before children used it, hence toilets had not been flushed and there was some spillage on the floor. The documentation required to maintain children's health is in place and completed accurately.

The children's dietary needs are satisfactorily met with individual requirements recorded and alternatives provided for those children who require them. Children were seen to be enjoying a snack of toast and fresh fruit and an accompanying drink. Meals are homemade and cooked on the premises by the cook.

Children enjoy and delight in physical play in both indoor and outdoor activities. Their development is promoted effectively because the staff plan a range of dance, music and movement and outdoor physical play. The children show good control of their movements as they practise balancing and moving freely to music. They work hard when taking part in the ballet lessons as they point their toes and hold the correct ballet positions. They practise their fine movements as they use small tools, for example, brushes, pens, scissors and glue sticks, therefore, developing their hand-eye coordination.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play and learn in an environment that is mostly safe and secure. The setting is planned to meet children's needs by having dedicated areas for each age range. The children move through the different rooms to access the areas of continuous provision, for example, messy play, story time and role play. The environment is welcoming to children and families, being bright with displays of a combination of educational posters and pictures of children's work.

Children's safety is mostly protected as there are risk assessments for all areas and for outings in place. However, not all the required safety features to maintain the health and safety of the children are in place. There were unprotected electrical sockets accessible to children and the radiator in the pre-school room was determined as being too hot, although this was attended to immediately.

Children's safety is monitored appropriately because the key staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary, based on national and local guidance. Staff have a sound understanding of their role and of the signs and symptoms of abuse. However, the child protection policy does not fully cover the action to be taken should an allegation be made against a member of staff.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy and achieve as they are provided with play opportunities which include a balance of indoor and outdoor activities. They make choices from a selection of colourful resources and sit at the tables making jigsaws, colouring and building with blocks. They take part in the daily

routine of free play, literacy, numeracy, music and focussed activities. They benefit as staff sit with them and support them, talking to them as they play. However, there is some confusion regarding the staff's knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework in relation to how this is implemented.

The children's development is monitored and work collated within their individual folders. The folder and the planning incorporate a lot of worksheets and an inappropriate use of the worksheets for very young children and babies, for example, one young child's folder had 27 worksheets contained in it. Young children's creative development is not always promoted as staff sometimes physically assist them with their work during the focussed activity, for example, holding their hand to trace letters and complete the picture. Therefore, the focus is on the outcome of the activity and not the children's own interpretation and development.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The planning is completed by the managers and key workers, however, some are not sufficiently clear regarding the stepping stones where others demonstrate a clear understanding of the areas of learning. Staff find out about children's starting points as they have implemented an 'All about me' form completed with the parents, and carry out an initial assessment of the child when they begin at the nursery. Information is passed between the groups in the nursery to enable their starting point for each change of room to be identified. Evaluation of all activities takes place to ensure these meet the individual needs of the children with the differentiation aspect covered in the planning. The staff develop children's confidence and self-esteem by having positive relationships with them. Children seek out staff and readily ask questions, responding to the staff's use of praise and explanations.

Children are generally confident and interested in their play. They sit and discuss the topics of the week, the current one being 'under the sea'. They are beginning to attend to their personal needs when in the bathroom and enjoy taking on the role of the monitor at snack time. Behaviour is appropriate as children understand the need for rules and respond to instructions from staff, enabling learning to take place. They use their developing language skills to ask questions beginning with who, why and what, and talk about their play as they constantly chatter, organising their thoughts.

Children use numbers and understand there is a sequence to them as they count how many when counting the cups at snack time and the legs of the octopus during the under the sea activity. They learn about shapes as they name triangle, square and circle competently as they play. They delight in exploring the feely box as they happily put on a blindfold and find the mysteries within the box, for example, starfish, shell and shark. They learn about the world around them as they take part in activities which celebrate cultures and festivals, such as Easter and Chinese New Year. They enjoy the singing activities and express themselves through the dance sessions. They have opportunities to explore musical sounds as they name and listen to the sounds of the musical instruments. Overall, children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into the setting being valued and respected. They take part in all activities and access all areas of play as they all have the same opportunities to explore and experiment, including some activities being rotated. They celebrate their own festivals and those of others

as they learn about the wider world using resources on a daily basis that represent other cultures, for example, multi-cultural dolls and books.

There are sound strategies in place for helping children manage their behaviour. Staff use praise appropriately and children respond to praise with a smile and a feeling of satisfaction. Staff discuss behaviour with the children and explain the consequences of their behaviours. Children enjoy receiving stickers, stars and certificates which are used to promote and develop their generally good behaviour.

Partnerships with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are included in their child's learning because the staff share information on the six areas of learning and the Foundation Stage with them. There is an effective home link system in place which includes parents and staff working together to identify the learning needs of the child. The children take home one of the named home link toys, for example, 'Lucy Ladybird' or 'Joe the Giraffe', and record aspects of the toy's time with them at home. This includes some lovely comments and photographs of the activities that children undertake with their toys and parents.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The children learn about the community and other cultures as they engage in activities which promote their understanding. They enjoy playing together and learn to wait their turn for the focussed activity, to share, to work together and to be kind to each other.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting makes appropriate use of time, space and resources to enable children to make some choices and access toys and equipment. There are satisfactory staffing procedures in place, including the induction and appraisal system, to ensure staff meet children needs. Most necessary documentation is in place and supports the care and education of the children. Training for staff is encouraged and a number of staff are currently updating their skills to ensure they obtain an early years qualification.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff are led by a management team who are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. There are regular staff meetings to address all issues and identify changes to the care and education practice. The staff work well together as a team and support each other in their roles. Each member of staff has a clearly defined role within the nursery and works under the direction of the manager or key worker.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provision was asked to ensure minimum staff to child ratios are maintained, to ensure that sufficient and suitable sleeping equipment is available to meet the needs of children aged two plus, and to implement a record of attendance for staff showing times present.

The provision has a system in place to ensure that ratios are always maintained so that the National Standards are met. They have purchased further bedding rolls and, therefore, children have individual bedding mats and covers. There is a system for recording the time of attendance of the staff which includes the times of duty. The above actions ensure all regulatory requirements are met and the care of the children is promoted.

## Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards. Ofsted received concerns in relation to National Standard 6: Safety. An inspector visited the provision on 20 December 2007. Five actions were raised. Ofsted is satisfied that the provider has taken appropriate action to address the concerns raised and that 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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. 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 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 all electrical sockets and the radiator in the pre-school do not pose hazards to children
- ensure the child protection policy makes clear the procedure to be followed should an allegation be made against a member of staff
- ensure the cleanliness of the bathroom at all times for children
- ensure all staff are aware of the childcare programmes that are used within the nursery, for example, the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

### 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 the use of the worksheets to ensure children have enough opportunities to explore and create their own interpretations of their work with less focus on the outcome of the activity by staff (also applies to care)
- ensure all staff who are responsible for the planning are fully aware of the stepping stones and early learning goals.

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)