

Bright Sparks Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	251675
Inspection date	03 July 2007
Inspector	Deirdra Keating
Setting Address	St Peter's Church, Stoke Park Drive, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP2 9TH
Telephone number	01473 602270
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Registered person	Bright Sparks Nursery
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Bright Sparks Nursery is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children at the Nursery. It opened in 2001 and operates from two rooms in St Peter's Church Hall, South West Ipswich. The Nursery is open from 09:30 to 12:00 on Monday to Friday during term time. The children have access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 52 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 28 receive funding for early education. The setting supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery currently employs eight members of staff. Of these, seven hold early year's qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted because staff follow thorough and consistent procedures that are documented and shared well with parents. An informative notice board alerts parents to any contagious illness, which helps promote children's good health. Children understand good health and hygiene practice because staff actively promote hand washing. Written prompts and explanations encourage children to understand the importance of washing their hands. Children receive good care if they are ill or have an accident as the nursery has the correct procedures in place underpinned by effective policies. A well-stocked first aid kit is readily available and a high number of staff have first aid training. An accident book is carefully maintained and written parental consents are provided by parents to ensure that children can receive the best care in the event of an accident or emergency.

Children have a good understanding of a healthy diet. Individual dietary requirements are recorded clearly in written agreements. Food is healthy, nutritious and prepared properly by staff who have attended food hygiene training. Written reminders ensure that hygiene standards are consistently maintained. Snacks consist of raisins, biscuits, fruit and a choice of milk or water. Water is freely available for the older children, however younger children have to request drinks from staff. Younger children gain independence as staff encourage them to help each other serve snacks and pour drinks.

Children have the benefit of daily fresh air as they have free access to a secure outdoor play area. A garden provides further space for children to run around in the fresh air and develop their skills using a good range of equipment. A covered area protects children from the sun and enables them to play happily in the shade using a good range of toys and equipment. Regular trips to the local shops and woodland walks all encourage children to experience the benefit of exercise outside in the fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in welcoming, spacious environment that is bright and cheerful. Children's work is displayed around the walls which provides a child-friendly environment. Space has been organised well to provide separate rooms in the spacious accommodation. The nursery is light and spacious and consequently children can eat and play together comfortably. An outdoor play area that has a good range of equipment provides a further extension of the rooms. Children access toys and equipment that are clean and in a good state of repair. Toys are stimulating, fun and children are interested to play with what is available. Children are cared for in a safe environment where staff take steps to minimise all risks. Daily risk assessments and checks ensure that all areas of the nursery are suitable and ready for purpose. The premises are secure and arrival and departure times are managed safely and effectively. Children go on trips with written permission from parents, where a clear outings procedure ensures that high adult to child ratios are maintained. Venues are risk assessed prior to trips to ensure that they are safe and suitable for children.

Monthly fire drills that are documented ensure that children know what to do in the event of a fire. Emergency procedures are displayed and all staff are confident in their roles. Fire prevention equipment is all in place and checked regularly. Children are protected well from

potential harm because staff are vigilant and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. Staff have a good knowledge of safeguarding issues and have all attended safeguarding training. A confidential incident book is available and a written statement is displayed for parents and carers. A clear policy is proactively shared with parents prior to admission.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are motivated to learn through the good range of resources that support their care, learning and play. Children develop confidence and a strong sense of self through positive interaction with adults. Staff have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and are clearly aware of younger children's needs. The children enjoy a good range of messy play including paint, cooking and water. They ice biscuits and make fairy cakes which they clearly enjoy. Staff encourage children to become increasingly independent at snack time where children pass bowls and pour out their own drinks. A key worker system enables staff to know children well and maintain good working relationships with families. A flexible settling in policy ensures that parents can leave children according to the individual needs of the child. Staff seek information regarding children's home routines in order to maintain continuity of care according to each child. They carefully collate children's pictures and photographs and compile them into a scrap book for parents.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Staff are all actively involved in the planning which is balanced well across all areas of learning. Ongoing training enables staff to be creative as they plan around the children's interests. Learning intentions linked to stepping stones are clearly outlined in plans where individual support is detailed to ensure that all children are included and can continue to progress. These are monitored by key worker staff who use their knowledge of children's learning to make observations and build records. Staff proactively gain comprehensive information as children start in an 'entry profile' to ensure that children's starting points are established. Staff support children well during stimulating activities, providing challenge with open-ended questions and extending children's learning. They manage children sensitively, giving good explanations and using praise. The session is well-paced, allowing children time to complete activities of their choice in their own time. Staff are directly involved in children's learning, working in small groups where children focus intently on activities of their choice. Children come together as a large group for a story at the end of the session. However, the group is too large and does not provide enough challenge and involvement for some children.

Children are happy, settled and purposefully engaged throughout the session. They work well as part of a group, taking turns and sharing fairly. Children play harmoniously together showing care for one another and the environment. They generally settle well into the familiar routine. However, the large group registration does not encourage all children to separate from parents confidently. Children are making good progress in their early writing and reading skills. A book lending scheme enables all children to take a book home to enjoy. Children speak with emerging self-confidence at group time as they share weekend news. There are many opportunities for children to practice their early writing skills. A mobile name bank is introduced to activities to encourage children to name their work and practice forming their letters.

Children are making good progress in their mathematical development. They enjoy a broad range of mathematical equipment which enables them to learn about shape, space and weight. They calculate during a counting activity using cotton reels and use mathematical size language as they compare plastic teddy bears. Children count as part of their daily routine and use a good range of mathematical equipment including calculators, scales, coloured shapes and a till. Interactive computer games encourage children to learn about shapes. They know how to operate the computer and do so competently. Children have opportunities to explore through messy play experiences where they can compare differences in damp and dry sand and observe growing things such as vegetables. Children enjoy a good range of exciting activities outside where their curiosity and interest are enhanced. They show a good interest in the world in which they live as they play in the 'Bright Sparks Travel Agents' where staff use a globe to help children learn about other places in the world.

Children have good opportunities to develop their imaginary play and creativity. They freely access the easels where they paint using their own style and method. Children engage very well in imaginary play in the role play area where they have time to become engrossed in their game. They play cooperatively and staff provide good support by getting down to the children's level and participating sensitively in their game. Children manage dressing-up clothes well which encourages them to develop their physical skills. Children are developing good dexterity skills as they use scissors and glue, and learn to thread. They manipulate dough with care, making specific shapes using a range of tools. Children negotiate space well as they ride around outside on trikes. They crawl through tunnels and weave in and out of cones as they practise for sports day activities. A climbing frame and slide gives children opportunities to develop their climbing skills well outside in the garden area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children in this setting develop a good sense of belonging and are valued. Children's pictures are displayed on the walls giving a personal sense of belonging to each child. Staff work closely with parents to ensure individual needs are met and sensitively adapt activities to enable all children to participate. Children are able to make choices about how to spend their time and enjoy playing in different size groups. Children gain a sense of community as they take regular walks in nearby woodland and visit local shops. They learn about equality through their play and access a good range of resources which reflect diversity and the wider community. Cultural and traditional days are planned such as Chinese New Year which encourages children to respect the views and beliefs of others. Children play harmoniously together as they share resources and take turns in games. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The setting has a very positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff follow effective policies in line with the code of practice to ensure that children are included in all activities. The nursery manager is responsible for this aspect of practice and has training and experience of working with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children have written records documenting all aspects of care and outlining specific targets. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure that individual needs are met and children's development is monitored.

Behaviour is of a consistently high standard. Children become engrossed in a wide range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate activities. Staff use positive strategies, in line with the written behaviour policy, to help children to understand clear and consistent boundaries. Occasional incidents are documented and shared with parents at the end of the session. Children

benefit from a positive partnership with parents through staff continuing to share important information about children's needs and interests. Parents are welcomed in at the beginning and end of each session where they have verbal exchanges with staff. This ensures an appropriate response to children's ever changing needs.

The partnership with parents and carers of children receiving nursery education is good. A book lending scheme enables parents to share books with children and parents are invited in for an open week. Parents are kept informed about topics and events through newsletters in order that they can support children in their learning. However, records and profiles are not readily available for parents to share and contribute to. An informative notice board provides parents with information about the nursery and a clear complaints procedure is readily available.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for well by suitable adults who are motivated and have had all necessary checks to ensure children's safety. Good effective working policies are in place to support staff and ensure their well-being. Children are settled and ratios are generally maintained throughout the session. However, the organisation of staff escorting younger children to the toilet is not always effective, which could compromise children's safety. Sessions are organised with clear routines which children know and this enables them to settle and become confident. A daily register of children's arrival and departure times is maintained. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of children's care and learning. They understand and follow the nurseries policies and procedures to take appropriate steps to protect children and promote their well-being and development. The manager has a good understanding of the National Standards and her responsibility to comply with the conditions of her registration.

The leadership and management is good. The nursery is led by a dedicated manager who leads a strong team. The aims of the setting are very well reflected in all aspects of practice. Clear job descriptions and an ongoing supervision process ensure that all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and their training needs are highlighted. Staff have attended a very good range of training that reflect the setting's high commitment to ongoing professional development and ensure that children are cared for by knowledgeable and trained staff. Weekly staff meetings enable staff to review the effectiveness of the curriculum planning. Staff work closely with an early years advisory teacher to ensure that teaching methods are inclusive and effective. This ensures that the quality of nursery education is adapted accordingly to meet the individual needs of the children. Links with the local primary school are being developed to include transition meetings to support children who start school. All required documentation and consents are in place to ensure that children are looked after according to their parents' wishes. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to develop the range of resources that positively reflects diversity. This has been done and children gain an awareness of other cultures and beliefs through dolls, stories and celebrations. The provider was also asked to ensure that the main playroom and committee room are maintained at an adequate and comfortable temperature. This has been done and the rooms are comfortable and well ventilated. The group were asked to improve the accuracy and clarity of the registration system to clearly identify the number of children and adults present at any given time. Registers are now accurately maintained for both children and staff which ensures children's safety.

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 fresh drinking water is available for all children at all times
- ensure staff are deployed effectively regarding escorting younger children to the toilet from the committee room

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 a system for parents to share children's written records
- ensure that children are grouped appropriately in order to provide further opportunities to extend children's learning and enable children to settle confidently on arrival.

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