

Swallows Nest Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253511
Inspection date	18 October 2007
Inspector	Beverly Kemp-Russell
Setting Address	St Georges Church Community Hall, Eastbrook Road, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN6 7EW
Telephone number	07808 021505
E-mail	
Registered person	Swallow Nest Pre-School Committee
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?

Swallows Nest Pre-School has been registered since 1993. It operates from St. Georges Church Hall in Lincoln.

A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 23 children from two to five years of age on roll. This includes 13 funded three and four-year-olds. The setting supports children with special educational needs and there are no children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 09:30 to 12:00 hours. Term time only.

Seven staff work directly with the children. Six staff have an early years qualification. The setting receives support from Early Years Development Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Staff follow clear procedures for maintaining hygiene which ensures that the children are cared for in a clean and healthy environment, for example, tables are wiped with anti-bacterial spray prior to being used for snack time. Children are encouraged to become independent in promoting their own good health such as routine hand washing before food and children show confidence in using this ability. Children's health is promoted by comprehensive health and medication records and staff hold current first aid certificates which helps maintain children's health.

Children are offered an excellent choice of snacks which include orange, pear, banana, mango and raisins to ensure healthy eating choices are promoted. Staff sit with the children at snack time to encourage social skills and healthy eating. Children have access to milk and water throughout the session to ensure they are well hydrated.

Children enjoy innovative opportunities for physical activities and are highly skilled at using a range of small equipment to promote co-ordination skills. There is superb provision for children to use equipment such as a slide, climbing frame, bikes and balancing boards to develop their large body skills. Children have access to a well-equipped outdoor play area and to an indoor hall for large physical activities. Children have frequent opportunities to exercise in a variety of ways which are inspiring and motivate them to learn and develop. Staff plan and discuss topics, which include health, to promote children's awareness.

Children are able to rest according to their needs and the wishes of their parents. Staff provide a carpeted area with scatter cushions for children to rest and relax.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, well-maintained environment which is safe and secure. Children have very good opportunities to play safely outdoors. The risk of accidental injury to children is minimised through the active supervision of children, regular safety checks and ongoing risk assessments.

Children use appropriate equipment such as low-level tables and chairs to sit, eat and play safely. They also use a suitable range of developmentally appropriate resources which are regularly checked to ensure they are safe. Staff use explanations about safety so that children are able to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe. The building is kept properly secure so that unwanted visitors do not gain access to the setting or present a risk to the children. Fire fighting equipment is well-maintained and children frequently practise emergency evacuation procedures.

Children are protected well by the staff. The manager has a good awareness of child protection procedures and knows how to put these into place should she have concerns about the welfare of a child. Some staff have attended training and although all staff would report to the manager, not all are fully aware of the child protection policy and safeguarding children procedures. Children are never left alone with persons who have not been vetted and the staff know who will collect children at the end of each session.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The care and play experiences for children in the setting are outstanding. Children are supported to deal with the separation from parents and carers and develop close relationships with highly skilled staff caring for their age range. Staff discuss with parents to ensure that young children benefit from and experience familiar home routines helping them to feel safe and secure. Children show great interest in what they do, such as making junk model musical instruments and are often interested by resources such as construction kits. Children have superb opportunities to develop their creative skills and to use freedom of expression during imaginary play, painting and collage activities. Children make choices from a rich, varied and imaginative range of resources provided each day to ensure they are fully absorbed throughout the session. The planning of how activities and resources are presented ensures that children are inspired and motivated to learn which encourages children to reach their full potential. Staff actively contribute and provide a wealth of worthwhile activities and use assessments to ensure children are moving towards the next step. Staff include younger children in activities to develop their skills and are making full use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning for nursery education is good. Children make their own choices and are supported by staff. Staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage is good and they fully understand how children learn and develop and they put their expertise into practice to provide challenge for all children. All staff have experience of caring for children, they gently guide children and use questioning techniques which extends their language. Staff meet with parents initially to discuss children's starting points to ensure they are aware of observing progress. The assessment of children's progress towards the early learning goals and planning and assessment records clearly link to how all aspects of the stepping stones are covered. Observations are regularly completed to identify the next steps for children. The planning of how activities and resources are presented ensures that children are fully inspired and motivated to learn and encourages children to reach their full potential.

Children are confident and keen to get involved in activities. They form good relationships with staff and other children. Children are confident to try new activities such as creating pictures from a range of materials. They are able to sit and concentrate when using resources such as small world and programmable toys. They sit and chat happily to each other when completing jigsaw puzzles and offer support when building with construction equipment. They understand right from wrong and children's behaviour is very good. However, staff miss some opportunities at snack times to help children develop independence skills. Children are able speakers using clear sentences to explain and recall past events. They listen carefully and talk confidently during registration and activities. There is an adult-led writing table but this is too formal and structured but children do have opportunities to write for a variety of purposes. They have opportunities to enjoy books and participate in story telling. Children count by rote well with more able children eager to count well beyond 10. They know the names of common shapes and use size language in their play such as large and small. Staff provide opportunities to say and use number names in familiar context with the children but there are too few opportunities for children to use methods to solve practical problems. Children have a growing awareness of other cultures as they celebrate many festivals and have resources to enable them to explore and learn, such as an excellent range of multi-cultural dolls. They explore and investigate in the natural world and enjoy growing seeds such as sunflowers. Children enjoy moving in different ways such as climbing, running, balancing and jumping and their ability to make strong progress

in developing their large body movements is enhanced by planned indoor and outdoor activities. Children know most colours and have good opportunities to create and design for themselves. They regularly sing and make music and are very skilled at action rhymes. They have opportunities to use their imaginations through role play in a variety of settings such as, the shoe shop, vets, hospital and hairdressers. Children access information communication technology, but the computer is not used frequently enough.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Children are cared for by staff who work exceedingly well with parents to meet individual needs. All children and parents receive a very warm welcome from staff who are sensitive to each family's circumstances. Each child is known as an individual and time is spent making sure their needs are met and continuity of care is offered. Parents views about their child's needs are actively sought before the child starts at the setting, and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Staff carry out home visits before a child starts at the pre-school to fully discuss routines, formative assessments and to get the parents' point of view. Parents receive a wealth of information about the Foundation Stage and are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning by contributing to assessment and planned activities. Staff ensure that parents know how their child is progressing and developing by regular written and verbal contact. Open evenings are planned to encourage parents to become involved in the pre-school and their children's learning.

Staff have clear expectations of children's behaviour and through acting as excellent role models and using appropriate methods, such as consistent and gentle reinforcement of rules, children learn exceptional manners and to care for others. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement from staff, building their confidence and self-esteem.

Children's knowledge of the local community is promoted through discussion, visitors to the group such as, the vicar, postman and dental hygienist. They regularly share news about their own lives and their thoughts during circle time. Children's opinions and achievements are recognised and praised by everyone in the group and staff have an excellent understanding of individual children's needs. Children's social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for and protected by a caring staff team. Six staff are suitably qualified and all staff have experience of caring for children in a variety of roles. Staff maintain very good ratios to keep children safe and support their care and play to meet the needs of the children. Most policies and procedures are known by the staff and are in the main, effective in promoting children's health and well-being. However, robust recruitment and vetting procedures are not fully developed. Records are well-maintained and are shared with parents to ensure continuity of care. Children are cared for in a secure environment and staff are effective in supervising children. Children feel secure and develop a strong sense of their own self-worth through the relationships they share with staff.

Leadership and management for nursery education is good. The nominated person and the leader's commitment is bringing about effective improvements in the pre-school. They are committed to improving staff's knowledge to ensure they have a purposeful focus for future improvements for children's learning and development. The manager takes overall responsibility

for the planning but all staff contribute to the children's curriculum and they have a high level of awareness of how children learn. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the pre-school have made good improvements in promoting children's health and well-being. They have updated the induction process for new staff to ensure it is effective and provide a good range of resources and activities that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. Children have opportunities to access everyday technology such as the keyboard, telephone and computer to support their learning. Staff record children's achievements and complete regular assessments which link to the areas of learning.

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.

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 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 staff are aware of the setting's child protection policy and safeguarding children procedures
- develop further robust recruitment and vetting procedures.

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):

- enable children to have regular opportunities to independently practise pre-writing skills
- ensure the planning and delivery of the curriculum provides sufficient challenge for more able children.

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