

Sonning Common Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	403386
Inspection date	29 January 2008
Inspector	Melissa Cox
Setting Address	Grove Road, Sonning Common, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 9RJ
Telephone number	01189 724760
E-mail	scplaygroup@btinternet.com
Registered person	The Trustees of Sonning Common Pre-School
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sonning Common Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1966 and moved to the current site in 1981. It operates from a terrapin building in its own garden. A parent management committee runs the group, which is also responsible for managing Sonning Common Kites wrap around care. It is located in the primary school site in Sonning Common and serves the local area.

The pre-school offers full daycare for 45 children aged two years to under eight years. There are currently 63 children on roll. This includes 30 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The group opens five days a week term time only. Sessions are from 09:00 until 11:40 and 12:40 until 15:10. The group also offer a lunch club in the pre-school building. 'Wrap around care' for 20 children aged three to five years is provided in the early years unit within the main school building. This is staffed with pre-school staff and operates afternoons only.

There are 13 part-time staff working with the children. Three staff have relevant early years childcare qualifications to level 2 or 3 and two staff are working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are aware of their own needs and are developing independence in their personal care. Older children independently use the toilet facilities and are aware of the importance of hand washing after using the toilet and before snack time. Younger children are beginning to learn about the need to wash hands after visiting the toilet and use wet wipes to wash their hands before eating, with some support from staff. Staff follow satisfactory procedures to ensure children's good health is promoted. They keep toilet and nappy changing areas clean and well equipped and staff consistently use disposable gloves during these routines which prevents cross infection.

Children are encouraged to learn about healthy eating. They are offered a selection of snacks during the week, which includes several fruit choices or warm buttered toast. Opportunities for children to be more independent during this routine are limited as only staff are involved in the preparation and serving of the snacks. Children learn about healthy eating through planned activities and show an increasing awareness of the importance of a healthy diet as they shop for healthy foods in the role play area. Appropriate information has been obtained from parents about any special dietary needs and staff ensure those children are fully included at snack time. Children have an opportunity to stay for lunch club and bring their own packed lunches which are stored appropriately. Most required regulatory paperwork to ensure children's health is maintained, although documentation for the wrap around care is not linked specifically to this setting only. Staff keep their first aid training up to date and have a fully stocked first aid kit should an emergency arise.

Children benefit from daily fresh air and regular exercise, as they make use of the outdoor environment. They are developing co-ordination while walking on the balancing beams and show an increasing awareness of others, particularly when cycling or running around the garden. Children take risks as they climb on the wooden play equipment showing increasing co-ordination and skill. They enjoy spending time in the playhouses and playing running games with staff.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to a classroom which is welcoming and bright with displays of previous work on the walls. They have access to a satisfactory range of toys and play materials which staff prepare for them at the beginning of the session with some resources organised to be accessible to the children.

The pre-school has suitable security arrangements in place and parents and visitors are let in and out and are challenged if staff do not know them. They complete a daily visual check of the premises and garden area to ensure it is safe for children to use although this does not extend to suitable ratio's which compromise children's safety. Fire drills are practised regularly and children are beginning to recognise the importance of fire evacuation in their nursery. Children are beginning to learn about keeping themselves safe as they remind each other about not running in the classroom.

Staff have a basic understanding of their responsibilities for protecting children's welfare. Supporting documentation is available although the documentation does not contain a statement

should an allegation be made against a member of staff. Some staff have had recent training in this area ensuring staff would act promptly if they had a concern about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

Children separate from their parents with confidence and settle down to play quickly. Children enjoy some play-based activities in their day as they learn through first hand experiences, for example, kicking leaves in the garden or enjoying the sand and water. They have daily opportunities to access to the outdoor area where they are able to ride bikes or scooters and shout with excitement as they chase balls and hoops across the playground. Children in wrap around care have opportunities to use the outside area at the main school, but further planning for this session is limited. Staff have not implemented a system for recording observations of younger children's progress and as a result are unable to plan the next steps for the children's play, learning and development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Children do not make sufficient progress because teaching is poor. Interesting activities are planned for the children, although do not link specifically to children's individual needs. The range of activities and experiences provided are not broad enough to cover all the areas of learning and as a result children do not make sufficient progress. Staff have a developing knowledge of the Foundation Stage although this is not secure. They do not record children's progress or use information to plan the next steps in the children's learning.

Children are learning to count to 10, for example, when counting how many children are in the group at register time. They explore basic mathematical language as they sing rhymes accompanied by the piano and use the tea cups in their pretend play to explore quantity. However, staff do not use everyday routines to reinforce mathematical language or build on the children's knowledge, for example, counting out cups at snack time.

Children are involved and interested in role-play as they organise the 'pretend' area. They discuss whether to hang out their pretend washing on the line in case it starts to rain and prepare tea and snacks for each other at a pretend tea party. Children's free creativity, especially when completing art activities, is limited as there is too much over direction by adults to achieve the end result, for example, when making a Thomas poster for the classroom.

Children have some opportunities to see their names in print when they hang up their coats, or self register by choosing their name from the selection on the table. Children have some opportunities to mark make as they write on work sheets with the help of staff. Few children attempt to mark make, as staff do not promote this effectively and there is a lack of suitable and accessible resources.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Children are welcomed into the nursery by staff making the children feel valued. They show familiarity with this routine and settle fairly well. Children are beginning to learn about the diversity through using the adequate range of resources, such as books and puzzles. Children with additional needs are not fully supported in the group. The staff are developing systems

to support children but have a basic knowledge of their responsibilities. They are beginning to work with outside agencies but fail to keep appropriate records or plan effectively to support the children further in the pre-school.

Behaviour in the pre-school is poor. Staff fail to manage behaviour in a positive way as they have unrealistic expectations of the children due to their age or abilities. Some children become disruptive, especially in large group situations, showing limited understanding of behavioural boundaries. On occasions they find it hard to share toys and resources although this is due mainly to the lack of suitable activities and appropriate staff interaction. As a result, children are unable to learn and play safely. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not fostered.

The pre-school shares some information with parents, which is available on the notice boards and includes details of fundraising and some basic information about topic work. Parents speak readily of their satisfaction with the care the children receive. However, the playgroup fails to provide parents with up-to-date information about its policies and procedures and regular, accurate information about their child's progress in the group. A complaints procedure is available but does not contain accurate information and is not shared with parents. The pre-school have failed to ensure a suitable system is in place to record any complaints. This is a breach of regulation.

The partnership with parents and carers of the children receiving nursery education funding is inadequate. Parents are not provided with good quality information about what the group offers their children or useful and accurate information about the Foundation Stage. They do not receive detailed information about their children's progress in learning because assessment procedures are very basic.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The group has breached regulations by not informing Ofsted of changes to the committee. Although current staff are vetted, the pre-school has failed to complete the necessary paperwork required by regulation, for the committee members. Staff demonstrate a poor understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Ratios are not always maintained, particularly in the garden and on some occasions staff fail to note down their attendance accurately in the register, which are breaches in regulation. The pre-school has a procedure to follow if a child should become lost, but do not have a procedure to follow should a child fail to be collected from the setting, which is a regulation. Some emphasis is placed on training although the group lack qualified suitably qualified staff for the wrap around care scheme which is also a breach in regulation. This poor organisation compromises the children's safety and well-being limiting their potential to develop.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is inadequate. The manager is keen to improve the outcomes for children but currently does not evaluate the nursery's practice effectively. Systems are not in place to monitor the staff's understanding of the Foundation Stage or their implementation of it, which means children do not make satisfactory progress towards the Early Learning Goals. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last care inspection, the pre-school was asked to ensure minimum staffing qualifications were maintained. In addition several recommendations were set relating to documentation including accident records, the behaviour policy and attendance register. The group have addressed the documentation issues but have failed to address staff qualifications. This has an impact on the children attending the setting as staff fail to support them to develop their potential.

The previous nursery education inspection required the pre-school to devise an assessment system to record children's progress towards the early learning goals and to identify their targeted next steps in learning and share their progress with parents. Limited improvement has been made in addressing the recommendations set, with limited information being recorded in children's assessment records. The group do not plan for the next steps in children's learning and information shared with parents is poor.

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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure all Committee members complete and return to Ofsted DC2 forms and have a working knowledge of the National Standards
- provide a stimulating range of activities and experiences daily, which challenges children appropriately in their learning
- develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development
- ensure a record of all complaints is maintained and appropriate information from that record is shared with parents on request
- develop and implement an action plan that sets out how supervisors will achieve a level 3 qualification

- ensure staff are deployed effectively to meet the required ratios, particularly in the garden area
- ensure that the attendance register for staff is maintained, showing clear times of arrival and departure
- ensure that all documentation is reviewed and is in line with the National Standards with specific regard to the behaviour, child protection, uncollected child and complaints policies and this documentation links directly to those groups managed by the committee only.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- develop and implement a system for recording observations of children's progress and use these observations to plan the next steps for the children's play, learning and development (also applies to care)
- improve systems to monitor and evaluate teaching and the curriculum
- develop and share documentation and records with parents, to inform them about the setting, the activities provided for the children, and their children's development (also applies to care)

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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