

Pumpkin Patch

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY234878
Inspection date	31 October 2007
Inspector	Christine McInally
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Registered person	Anita Dawn Hotton
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?

Pumpkin Patch Day Nursery is situated in Hove, close to the seafront, and is based in a large detached house. The nursery is open on weekdays from 08.00 to 18.00. It is privately owned and the owner has another nursery situated in Brighton. The nursery serves the local area and is registered to care for 45 children at any one time. There are currently 79 children on roll, of these, 25 receive nursery funded education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and a number of children attend who have English as an additional language. The nursery consists of the Baby Unit for children from three months to two years, the Toddler Unit for children from two to three years and the Pre-school Room for children from three to five years. There is a safe, secure rear garden available for outdoor play. There are 13 members of staff, of these, 11 hold recognised early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children thrive because staff follow effective procedures and practices which meet their physical, nutritional and health needs. They are familiar with routines for hand washing and know to do this before eating and after using the toilet. The children learn about effective hygiene practices from the role models of the staff, for example, as they see staff wiping tables with antibacterial spray. Good procedures such as staff wearing disposable gloves for nappy changing, helps sustain high levels of hygiene and prevents cross infection.

Children enjoy plenty of exercise which is good for their health. Staff have a sound knowledge of Birth to three matters; they use the guidance well to provide a range of physical play experiences for babies and young children. Babies are encouraged to stand, crawl and extend their own physical skills through interaction with the caring staff. A wide variety of activities helps older children gain increasing control of their bodies for example, as they play ball games outside or as they put on the dressing-up clothes. All children are able to rest and be active according to their needs.

Children experience a range of healthy snacks including breadsticks and fruit encouraging them to develop healthy eating practices. However, the organisation of snack time is less effective than the rest of the session. Children are not offered opportunities to be involved in the preparation of snack or to pour drinks for themselves. Children enjoy varied and nutritious meals which comply with all special dietary requirements to ensure they remain healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, safe environment. The identification of any visitors is checked and their presence is recorded with date and time in the visitor's book. Bright displays of artwork, colourful furnishings and attractive information displays provide a welcoming atmosphere for children and their parents. Children benefit from playing in a spacious well organised environment. This allows them to move around and play safely. They have easy and safe access to a good range of toys and resources appropriate for their age.

Children begin to learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe as they practise fire evacuation procedures. They learn about safety through staff's clear and simple explanations as to why a rule is in place, for example they know not to run inside, as they might fall and hurt themselves.

Children are safeguarded by staff that have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures. There is a clearly written policy which is shared with the parents. Children and staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire because these are regularly practised. All of these measures contribute to the safety and welfare of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The care, learning and play experiences for children are good. Children eagerly enter the setting and are confident in their surroundings and soon engage in their chosen activities. They are secure in the nursery's welcoming environment and have positive relationships with staff which increases their sense of trust and well-being. An effective key person system ensures that babies and toddlers are cared for by consistent staff, whenever possible. Children achieve well because staff are skilled and use their understanding of early years guidance, such as Birth to three matters and the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage, to provide good quality care and education.

Babies and toddlers enjoy lots of physical contact with the staff which enables them to feel extremely secure and play contentedly. Staff value children's contributions and creations, displaying them attractively on wall displays, developing children's self-esteem. They also include examples of children's work in the individual children's progress files with accompanying photographs, this information is then used very well to plan for the next steps in each child's learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff work well as a team; they are clear in their roles and provide consistent levels of support and interaction with the children. They are very attentive to children's ideas and skilfully adapt the intended learning to follow through on the children's interests and contributions. However, opportunities are missed to develop children's problem solving skills in everyday activities. Planning is good, links clearly to the stepping stones and ensures a wide range of activities and experiences are provided to extend children's learning. Observations and assessments are used to help inform the planning. Children flourish as the balance between adult and child-led activities allows them to learn at their own pace. Staff encourage children to make decisions and to self-select resources and equipment.

Children are happy, confident and interested in the activities offered. They are developing an awareness of others needs and have good self-esteem because staff listen to them and value their ideas and contributions. Children develop a healthy interest in books and enjoy sharing stories with adults and peers. They are confident speakers, and understand they can use writing for a variety of purposes and are beginning to write for themselves. Children count confidently to 10, and beyond. They use mathematical language as they engage in self-chosen activities, for example, as they discuss the different sized towers they have built outside. They choose number activities during free play and enjoy number rhymes and songs.

Topic work and practical activities arouses children's natural curiosity and develops their exploration and investigation skills. Children move confidently showing a good awareness of space and others in both the indoor and outdoor space. Children's creative development is encouraged through the varied selection of craft resources and creative activities provided. Good use is made of the role play area and small world resources to develop the children's imaginative skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are greeted warmly by staff who ask how they are and what they have been doing at home. This helps them feel secure and develop a sense of belonging. Children are encouraged to select their own activities, learning to make their own decisions. Staff respect parents wishes with regard to any individual needs, helping to promote the children's self-esteem. Children are developing an awareness of their own and other cultures through a range of resources, planned activities and as they celebrate a variety of festivals. Good use of visual symbols helps bilingual children develop an understanding of the nursery routines. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported through liaison with parents and other agencies.

The children behave well in the very positive environment of the nursery which fosters their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They enjoy the praise and encouragement they receive and follow simple rules well. They learn to take turns and show respect for each other.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. They receive written information about the early years curriculum and the associated areas of learning. The staff work very well with parents, they exchange information about the children each day as parents bring and collect their children. Newsletters and notice boards provide parents with additional information to ensure they are well informed helping to support their child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children play and learn in a warm, welcoming and well-organised environment. Their care is further enhanced by extremely good organisation and resources to support and extend their developing and learning. The nursery uses a 'free flow' system which allows the children to choose the activities they wish to participate in and when. Robust recruitment procedures ensure that children are cared for by staff who are suitably and appropriately vetted. There is a very good level of qualified staff working with the children and correct adult to child ratios are met at all times. This means children receive appropriate support when needed. Staff sit and play with the children, give them comfort when needed and one to one support. Children are familiar with the routine and are comfortable and at ease in the setting. An effective key person system ensures that children and babies are cared for by consistent staff.

Leadership and management is good. There are systems in place to monitor and evaluate the funded nursery education. Policies and procedures to guide the staff team are in place, and available to parents. These are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. All aspects of the children's care and learning are discussed with the parents, who are kept well informed of their child's achievements. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last care inspection the nursery changed how the administration of medicine is recorded ensuring confidentiality is maintained.

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):

- improve the organisation of snack time to develop children's independence and understanding of food hygiene

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):

- improve the use of daily routines to help children develop an understanding of problem solving

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