

Southmead Saplings

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY248911
Inspection date	03 January 2008
Inspector	Lorraine Sparey
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Registered person	Southmead Saplings - North Bristol NHS Trust
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 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?

Southmead Saplings Day Nursery was established in 2002. It is one of two nurseries managed by the North Bristol National Health Service Trust, primarily for children of Trust employees at local hospitals.

Children are cared for in self-contained accommodation on the ground floor of a hospital building. There are two separate units where children are grouped according to age; under two-year-olds and two to five-year-olds. Each unit has three distinct activity areas, and an outdoor playground. Children under two years have a separate sleep room.

A maximum of 42 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 62 children on roll, of these 19 are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery operates from 07.00 to 18.00 hours, Mondays to Fridays, all year round excluding Bank Holidays. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 15 staff working with children, of whom eight hold a relevant childcare qualification. Advice on educational provision is provided by the Early Years Partnership. The nursery is a member of the Bristol Standard Accreditation Scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have excellent opportunities to exercise and play in the fresh air. Both nursery units have their own well resourced outdoor area. The surface is made from safety materials which allows the children to use it in all weathers. Children aged over three years have swimming lessons at a local swimming pool on a weekly basis. Children's opportunities to develop their large and small muscle control are good. There is a wide range of age appropriate resources such as tricycles, small climbing frames, tunnels, balls and hoops for the children to freely use.

Children benefit from healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. A well-balanced meal is provided by the hospital caterers at lunchtimes. Staff sit with the children during mealtimes, making it a social occasion. Babies and younger children's food is puréed to ensure food is the right consistency. A range of fresh fruit is provided for snacks throughout the day. Children choose from milk or water and each child has their own labelled water bottle to maintain their fluid levels throughout the day. Babies' home routines with regard to feeding and sleeping are closely followed to ensure consistency in their care. Babies benefit from good interaction during feeding.

Children follow good hygiene routines. They know when and why they wash their hands. A four-year-old tells an adult 'We need to wash the germs away, they are like glitter, hard to remove'. Good visual prompts remind children to flush the toilet, wash their hands and dispose of the paper towels hygienically in the bin. Children's health and general well-being is supported through detailed policies and procedures. Temperatures are monitored throughout the nursery to ensure that the play areas are not too hot or cold for the children. The majority of staff hold a paediatric first aid certificate and well maintained first aid kits ensure that children are dealt with quickly and effectively in the event of an accident or requiring medication.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and well maintained environment. They can safely move around the nursery units and the outdoor area because all the required safety equipment is in place. For example, door guards protect children's fingers from becoming trapped, safety gates prevent younger children leaving the play rooms unsupervised. The keypad entry system ensures that no visitors can enter the nursery unless a member of staff opens the door. Generally records are maintained detailing who is on the premises through a staff register, a visitor's book and a record of children's attendance. However, on occasions children are not being signed out of the nursery and an accurate record of their attendance is not being maintained. This is a breach of regulation. Staff promote children's awareness of safety through being positive role models and explaining to the children about safety issues. For example, a member of staff explains to a toddler about being careful whilst climbing on the equipment in the garden. Children safely choose from a good range of toys and resources. In the baby unit and preschool unit toys are displayed on low-level shelves and on floor level to promote children's choices.

Children are protected from harm and neglect because staff demonstrate a sound awareness of signs and symptoms of potential abuse. They are able to describe appropriate procedures to follow in the event of a concern being raised. Parents are made aware of staff's roles and responsibilities through the setting's policies and procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and generally settled in the nursery. They are provided with a suitable range of age appropriate activities and play opportunities. Staff use The Birth to three framework and Foundation Stage curriculum to ensure that activities are varied and interesting. Several babies enjoy having a pretend picnic on a large plastic mat using a range of resources to support their play. They smile and giggle as they pour water from the pretend teapot into cups. A child becomes very excited as they splash the water with their hands and feet. Staff actively join in promoting their enjoyment. Other babies and toddlers enjoy a singing session, they enthusiastically join in with the actions. Children are confident to self select from a range of age appropriate toys depending on what they would like to play with. Staff with the babies and toddlers complete observations which they use to help develop children's progress. Staff with older children complete the observations but they are not always used to help plan suitable activities and play opportunities. Children benefit from the good interaction from the staff. They generally use open-ended questioning to help children think and problem solve. During a story the member of staff asks the children various questions and encourages them to follow the story. Children benefit from being able to access the outdoor area throughout the day. Staff provide a range of resources to support their play such as sand and water play, balls and hoops, various sized climbing frames and tunnels.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum to plan a suitable range of activities linked to the areas of learning.

Staff complete observations on children. However, these are not transferred to all children's profiles or assessments and therefore cannot be used effectively to plan the next steps in children's learning. Staff use a range of teaching methods to help children progress. For example, creating a stimulating environment where children can access resources easily, using open-ended questioning and allowing children time to complete activities to their satisfaction. Generally children are grouped appropriately to support their development and learning. However, at particular times during the day the activities and routines are not organised effectively to support children's learning. For example, children become restless whilst they are waiting for long periods for the paint to be prepared for the painting activity. At other times children are grouped in one room where the space is limited. Children accidentally tread on toys that other children are playing with disrupting their play. Children with additional needs are supported in the setting. Staff provide good levels of support to help children reach their full potential. Children with English as an additional language are supported within the playrooms. Staff obtain keywords in the child's own language and liaise closely with parents to ensure that children can fully participate in all activities.

Children confidently come into the setting and become involved in their chosen activity.

They are motivated and interested in the activities provided. Children are developing good relationships with their peers and the adults. Generally children's behaviour is appropriate given their age and stage of development. However, on occasions some children's behaviour becomes boisterous and affects other children's ability to learn. Children are usually independent in their personal skills. They use the toilet on their own and put their hats, gloves, scarves and coats on before going out to play. Children's language is developing well. Generally they are confident speakers and engage in sustained conversations. A four-year-old asks an adult if they would like to hear a joke. They enjoy telling them a joke about a crocodile crossing the road. Children enjoy listening to stories and generally use books appropriately. Several children look at a book as part of the reading activity with a member of staff. The staff member has a larger version of the storybook 'Titch' and the children each have their own book. The adult helps them follow the story and turn the pages correctly. Children are beginning to make marks in the well resourced mark making area and some children are beginning to form recognisable letters. However, children are not always encouraged to write their own names on their creative activities even though they are able to do so.

Children have good opportunities to learn about the natural world through caring for the nursery's African snails. Children help staff to feed and clean the snails. Children enjoy designing and constructing using a variety of materials. A child sits with a member of staff using foam shapes to build their house. Children have some opportunities to use information, communication and technology. The setting has a computer which is currently not working and a CD and tape player with headphones. However, the tape part of the player is not working. Children have opportunities to count for example the number of children present. Number lines displayed on the walls increase children's awareness of numbers. At times, staff encourage children to think about simple number problem solving. However, this is not consistent to reinforce children's understanding. Children use mathematical language correctly and in context.

Children have opportunities to develop their creative skills and use their imagination. The role play area is well resourced to enable children to develop their own ideas. Several children invite an adult to go with them to the North Pole in a pretend spaceship. The children line up several chairs and one of them gives a running commentary as they pretend to drive through space. A four-year-old gives some of the other children a hoop and tells them that it is their spacesuit and they will need it when they go walking on the moon. Children have good opportunities to draw and paint. An adult encourages the children to think about what colour paint they would like and they have a discussion about how you make different coloured paints by mixing them together. A four-year-old paints a fairy and delights in showing the other children and staff her painting. Children's physical skills are developing well. They competently use a range of tools such as scissors, paint brushes and cutlery at mealtimes. Children's large muscle control develops as they join in with group activities such as going on a bear hunt where they act out the story. They use a range of equipment in the garden such as climbing frame, barrels, hoops and balls. Some children are beginning to show awareness of space as they move around the playrooms without bumping into each other or equipment. However, some children find it difficult in more confined spaces not to tread on toys or each other.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's behaviour varies. Generally children show consideration to their peers, are polite and well mannered. However, on occasions older children's behaviour deteriorates and they become boisterous and disruptive. Staff do not always notice and their behaviour affects other children. Staff use some effective methods to manage behaviour such as getting the children to use a

sand timer, however they are not consistent in their approach. Staff working with the babies and toddlers work closely with the parents to ensure a consistent approach. For example, they use a variety of methods such as happy and sad faces to promote children's understanding of acceptable behaviour. Staff praise children to their achievements and good behaviour promoting their self-esteem. Children are learning about their community and the wider world through taking part in charitable events such as comic relief. The nursery manager has planned a festival evening where parents, children and staff share knowledge of different faiths, cultures and celebrations. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

There are procedures in place to ensure that children with additional needs are supported within the setting. Staff work closely with parents to gain information on children's individual needs to help them in providing appropriate care. Parents in the baby unit receive written information on a daily basis about nappy changing, sleeps and food to ensure consistency in their care. Parents report that they are very happy with the care that their children receive. They feel the staff are approachable and very committed to providing a bright, clean and caring environment where children can enjoy their time in the setting. The policies and procedures of the nursery are displayed on the parents noticeboard. However, some of the policies are out of date.

Partnership with parents and carers with regard to nursery education is satisfactory. Parents are verbally informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum. In the preschool unit there is some information displayed on the walls linking activities to the areas of learning. This helps parents in understanding their relevance. Parents are invited to parents evening to view their children's records and discuss their children's progress with their key worker. However, some children's records are not complete. Parents who have attended the parents evening comment about the good feedback they have received. Parents state that they are confident to talk to their child's key worker about their progress on a regular basis.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Rigorous and robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that children are cared for by suitable adults. However, Ofsted have not been informed of recent changes in nursery management. This is a breach in regulation. The trust has opportunities for staff to attend training in general subjects such as manual handling and health and safety. They also provide opportunities for staff to attend training more relevant to child care and education. Staff have regular meetings to ensure that they are up-to-date with childcare practices. The space and resources are generally used to support children's development and learning. However, at times these are not used effectively. For example, children are grouped together in one area which limits the space and the toys and play opportunities available. The setting has a range of policies and procedures to support providing positive outcomes for children. However, some of the policies are out of date and do not contain relevant information and some staff are not following the policies, for example, behaviour management. A register records children's attendance, however, this is not always completed when the children leave the nursery. All the required documentation is stored securely to maintain confidentiality of the children and their families.

The leadership and management are satisfactory. The person responsible for nursery education provision works closely with staff to ensure that children are provided with an appropriate range of activities. There are sound procedures to monitor the provision such as meeting with the early years advisory teacher, and the nursery manager monitors staff performance through appraisals and regular staff meetings. She also meets with the Trust's other nursery manager

to ensure consistency. The staff are very committed to improving provision. The nursery manager reports that staffing is an issue at the moment, due to staff being on maternity leave and temporary staff providing cover which does not allow staff time to complete children's assessments and other documentation.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting agreed to continue to monitor the effectiveness of the operational plan. The new manager is in the process of updating the operational plans to reflect current practices and procedures and to include the new staff. Once updated it will be available to parents to ensure that they are familiar with the setting's day-to-day running and policies and procedures. They also agreed to ensure that children aged under two years have sufficient access to outdoor play. Staff now ensure that the younger children have regular opportunities to use the baby unit garden. This ensures that children have regular access to fresh air and an area to develop their physical skills.

At the last education inspection the setting agreed to continue to develop assessments and planning so that all aspects of the curriculum are fully included to enable each child to build on their prior learning. Staff are currently in the process of reviewing the way they use children's assessments. They intend to move to learning diaries. However, at present children's assessments are not up-to-date and some are incomplete. Therefore they cannot be used effectively to plan the next steps in children's learning. The setting also agreed to ensure that the management of daily resources and activity allows children to extend their play appropriately in all areas of learning, particularly large muscle skills and information and communication technology. Staff plan a range of activities to support children's large muscle skills particularly in the outdoor area. However, access to resources is limited because the storage area is locked and staff are waiting for the hospital maintenance department to address. The computer and some of the other equipment that promotes children's awareness of information and communication technology is currently not working. Therefore children's awareness is not being fully promoted.

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 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 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 that staff manage children's behaviour consistently and effectively
- ensure that OFSTED are informed of staff changes in line with regulations
- ensure that a record of children's actual times of attendance is maintained at all times

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):

- ensure that activities and routines are organised to maximise children's learning
- ensure that children's assessment records are completed on a regular basis so that the next steps in children's learning is effectively planned
- ensure that procedures to monitor nursery education are effective

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