

Shoreside Out of School Services

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	310474
Inspection date	18 October 2007
Inspector	Frank William Kelly
Setting Address	Shoreside Primary School, Westminster Drive, Ainsdale, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 2QT
Telephone number	01704 576040
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Registered person	Shoreside Out of School Services
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Shoreside Out of School Services, which includes Tadpole Nursery, has been registered since 1994 and is operated by an organisation.

It is based within rooms in Shoreside Primary School, which is situated in the Ainsdale area of Southport in Merseyside. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery and 32 children may attend the out of school service at any one time. There are currently 43 children in total on roll. Children are aged from three to 10 years. Of these, 16 receive nursery funding.

Children come from a wide catchment area as some parents travel to and around the area to work.

The nursery opens each weekday from 9.00 to 15.15 during term times only. Currently out of school provision is provided from 08.00 to 08.50 and 15.15 to 17.50 during term times. Currently holiday provision is provided on a flexible basis which is dependant on demand. All children have access to an outside play area.

The nursery employs five members of staff. Three hold early years qualifications and the out of school employs four staff, three of which hold early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The policies and procedures in place reflect regulatory requirements and promote the health and well-being of the children. These include accident records and written consents for the administration of medication and the seeking of emergency medical treatment. On a daily basis staff follow good routines for further minimising the spread of infection, such as cleaning tables, and washing their hands. Food hygiene systems are in place, which include monitoring the temperatures of the fridge and freezer. After school staff also check manufacturers guidance with regard to the storage and shelf life of foods, such as spreads and jams.

Children in the nursery are developing an understanding of the importance of hygiene through daily routines, such as washing their hands after visiting the toilet or through discussions with staff. These include why it is not appropriate to lick the play dough and how germs can cause tummy upsets. Children attending the after school club are involved with a range of projects, which compliment and enhance their understanding of health matters. Projects to date include dental hygiene, and healthy eating.

Children enjoy plenty of regular opportunities to develop their physical skills, including weekly trips to go swimming. Indoors nursery children regularly use balancing equipment in the hall, participate in music and movement and are encouraged to try to put on their own coats. Outdoors they enjoy riding trikes, climbing the activity cube and running around. Older children participate in games of football, throwing a frisbee or playing 'piggy in the middle' with a tennis ball. During holiday periods regular trips to the local nature reserve enable the children to get out and about in the fresh air.

Secure systems are in place for sharing information about the children's individual dietary needs and preferences. Children enjoy a range of snacks that include many healthy options, such as toasted bread muffins, fruit and regular drinks. Children in nursery enjoy fruit pancakes. Those children staying for lunch bring their own packed lunch which is kept cool in the fridge. Fresh water is easily accessible as there is a jug and beakers in both nursery and after school.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The areas used for caring for the children are well organised to meet their needs and promote their safety. In nursery the room is very child centred with good access to a range of resources and decorated with displays that include the children's own work. Children attending after school have less direct access to equipment and furniture. That said, the equipment available is arranged well to allow the children to spread themselves out, relax and use the floor space as they wish. The range of toys, games and other equipment are of a good quality, clean, well maintained and suitable for their purpose.

Children's safety is protected through the organisation's policies and procedures, both in and out of the setting. Access to and from the setting is effectively monitored, with staff keeping the doors secured and children well supervised at all times. Risk assessments have been

completed by the school and staff implement daily checks on the premises prior to the children arriving or before allowing children to play outside in the playground. Outings procedures have been well thought out, including the planning of routes and taking appropriate equipment, such as mobile phones and emergency contact details.

Servicing and maintenance of the premises is monitored by the school and an annual check on the portable electrical equipment and the fire extinguishers is undertaken. In addition frequent evacuation procedures are practised with children attending all play sessions so that they can become familiar with what to do in the event of an emergency.

On a practical basis staff help children learn about keeping themselves safe. For instance, nursery children whilst out on a walk, are reminded not to run down the hill as it is very steep and they might fall forward and bump their faces. Older children enjoy visits from a range of local safety teams. These include learning about stranger danger from the community police officers, not playing with matches and lighters from the fire brigade and the importance of keeping off the rail tracks from the transport police.

Children are further safeguarded as staff have a sound understanding of child protection issues. Some staff have completed relevant training and confidently explain the procedures when asked. The policies and procedures are in line with the Local Children Safeguarding Board procedures and include relevant contact details.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are relaxed and settled in the setting. They arrive eagerly and separate with ease. Older children attending the after school sessions arrive in good spirits and meet in small groups with their friends. They choose from what is available to them, such as arts and crafts, construction materials, books, mini-pool and board games. Children who have attended for some time are familiar with the many alternative resources available and confidently approach staff to request them during the play session.

Staff plan activities linked to themes, seasonal and other cultural events. In out of school they include drawing competitions, for example, creating a monster. Other activities include word searches and quizzes about current projects. These help support children to widen their experiences and consolidate their learning in a fun and varied way. The children attending after school provision have good access to well resourced art and craft trolleys, which provide them with opportunities to explore and express their creativity with a variety of mediums.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff plan a range of interesting and stimulating activities, which are securely linked to the six areas of learning and specifically identified stepping stones. The setting monitors the children's progress by regularly updating the local authority 'plotting progress' development booklets. However, at present staff do not use this information to help plan the next steps for the individual child. Thus, the learning program is aimed at the group of children in general and does not ensure relevant and appropriate content that matches the different levels of the individual child's needs.

That said, many aspects of the teaching promote the children's learning. The setting has been attractively organised into several areas of continuous provision. This means that during free

play periods, the children have independent access to writing materials, technology and tactile experiences to experiment, investigate and play with as they wish. Resources are clearly labelled with both print and pictures and numerals are displayed throughout the setting. This helps children to locate and return toys independently, develop an understanding that print carries meaning and increase the children's familiarity with the numbers one to nine.

On a daily basis staff support children well, for example, they talk to the children about letters that they can recognise whilst completing the alphabet jigsaw. On a walk to see the trains, they find sticks and encourage the children to make sounds against the metal railings and during story time they draw the children's attention to the author and illustrator, asking and explaining to the children what they do.

Consequently the children attending nursery confidently explore their surroundings and play with resources with increasing familiarity. Several of the group have only just started nursery and staff have been concentrating on helping them settle and establishing ground rules. They sensitively help the children develop an understanding of turn taking and sharing, thus developing their social skills. Children listen well, ask questions and freely express their needs and wishes. For example, they ask if they can play ring games, such as 'Lucy Locket' and some request that they sit at a different table for their snack.

Children enjoy books and sit and listen well. The older children join in with the rhyme and the rhythm of the books. They voice their opinions on the illustrations and talk freely with the member of staff about which 'pair of pants' is their favourite. They are beginning to recognise their name cards as they self register on arrival. Good access to the pens and other mark making materials means that children's pencil skills are developing well. Older children independently select worksheets, which they join dots on successfully and some form recognisable letters as they write their name on their pictures.

Free access to technology in the form of compact disc players and computers promote the children's skills and understanding of how it operates. They select their favourite discs, load and play their favourite tracks. They understand how to pause, select forward and backwards and how to repeat songs, such as 'Five monkeys jumping on the bed'. Regular trips to the local shops and use of public transport help children learn about the immediate and wider world.

Children eagerly join in counting activities and spontaneously hold up groups of fingers to represent numbers when asked by visitors. Older children can recognise differences in the numbers and count confidently one to five and over. They understand that only four children can play at the play dough table.

Children enjoy a range of creative activities including self portraits, however, they are mainly adult led. For instance, during a sticking activity, the children are provided with glue sticks, pre-cut pieces of coloured paper and pre-drawn outlines of elephants. The children enjoy using the sticks and they talk about their favourite colours but there is little opportunity for them to express their own creativity or explore and experiment with texture and paint. On a daily basis, there are too few opportunities for the children to spontaneously paint or independently use the wide range of resources that the setting has.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The systems in place for sharing information about the children's individual needs effectively promote the care provided for children. Children in the nursery have made a book about themselves, which includes members of their family and their likes and dislikes. Suitable systems have been devised that demonstrate a willingness and commitment to support care for children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Children have formed good relationships with staff and peers, which is fostering their sense of community. Older children in the after school club willingly let the younger children join in their activities, such as board games. There is a satisfactory selection of resources that reflect the diversity in today's society. Books about differing nationalities, religions and celebrations are helping children to learn about differing lifestyles. These are complimented with food tasting at snack time and fun craft activities, such as making cards for Diwali.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff present children with positive role models, which they mirror well. There is an emphasis on polite exchanges and children are actively encouraged to use please and thank you. Interactions and planned activities help the children develop their sense of caring and tolerance. These include meeting on a weekly basis for play and story sessions with other groups of children who have learning difficulties or disabilities. Younger children are encouraged to take turns when using the tools in the play dough or not talking over each other. Children attending the after school club learn about caring for their environment and the wildlife. They enjoy discussions with the local coastal rangers about how long rubbish on the shoreline takes to break down, and the positioning and care of nesting boxes for the birds in their garden.

Older children attending out of school club contribute to and agree the club rules, which they write down and display on the notice board. Leaflets and information about bullying are displayed with additional leaflets available for children to take. These include relevant contact details of national support agencies, such as Childline.

Partnership with parents and carers is good as on a day to day basis much information is shared verbally about how the children have been and what they have been doing. Parents of children who are in receipt of nursery education are provided with good information about the Foundation Stage. This includes the six areas of learning and how they are covered by the planned activities linked to the current themes. Parents are invited to look at their children's progress reports as and when they wish.

The setting provides a range of printed information about the activities and works closely with parents to help children settle at their own pace. Informative information packs are available about how the setting operates, along with posters and regular newsletters each half term.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Systems are in place to ensure that fully cleared staff are employed to care for the children at all times. Key worker groups have been established to help children feel settled and welcome. In the nursery, toys and resources are displayed attractively and children have good opportunities to make choices of their own. This is less evident within the after school club as the shared physical environment of the main school hall inhibits this.

That said, children enjoy what is available to them and confidently ask for additional resources or to go outside to play. Routines provide the children with some structure of the day, however, they are not always as effective as they could be. For example, children attending the after school club, are required to sit at the tables with little to engage them whilst they wait for the snack to be served. When it does arrive there is little opportunity for the children to be independent, such as spreading their own jam or honey. For children attending nursery, equipment, such as water jugs are too big and heavy to enable children to pour their own drinks successfully.

Good policies and procedures are in place and on a day to day basis staff work well as a team, they are familiar with their individual roles and routines, thus, promoting consistent care for the children. However, there are some inconsistencies throughout the service. Systems for recording children's details and parental consents, although meets regulatory requirements, differs between the nursery and out of school provisions. Some staff are not clear about where specific documentation is stored or how it is organised. At present there is no structured management monitoring system implemented by the registered board of trustees to ensure that all aspects of the service operate efficiently and consistently.

The leadership and management regarding nursery education is satisfactory. They demonstrate a clear commitment to improving the nursery education and outcomes for children by seeking and following advice from the local early years teacher team. They have developed the environment, and activity programmes well, which is having a positive impact on the children's learning. However, assessment systems are still not sufficiently secure to ensure that more capable children are sufficiently challenged and that the activities are suited to the individual child's learning styles.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, five actions were raised and three recommendations made to improve the care for the children. Since then the setting has, overall, responded appropriately to all issues raised and in doing so has improved the safety and well-being for the children.

Children's safety has been improved as details relating to all members of the committee and those that hold managerial posts have now been submitted to Ofsted and vetting procedures completed or instigated as changes have occurred. Staff's knowledge of the National Standards has been improved as copies are now available for the staff to refer to. In addition the setting has developed an operational plan that is organised to reflect how it promotes the five outcomes of the 'Every Child Matters' framework.

Child protection has been improved through the updating of the policies and key staff attendance at training workshops. The setting has ensured that at least one member of staff is always present that holds an up to date first aid certificate and has arranged for additional staff to attend refresher training in the near future. In addition a system has been established to ensure that other contingency staff are available to cover in the event of an emergency. Daily checks and organisation of the premises now means that they are checked for safety before children are cared for and that access through the various fire exits around the building is possible during the times of operation.

Documentation and recording systems have been updated and clearly show staff and children's times of attendance. Other policies and procedures have been developed, however, at present

there is no formal system implemented by the board of trustees to ensure that each part of the service is implementing them in a consistent manner.

At the last Nursery Education inspection, four key issues were identified and relating to the planning and assessment systems, and children's opportunities to enjoy books.

Since then some progress has been made to promote and improve the learning program for the children. Staff now plan a range of activities which securely link to the six areas of learning and relevant stepping stones. Children have good access to books at all times and staff use good inflection and tone when reading the stories to the children, thus, helping to develop children's love of books. However, at present staff do not implement a rigorous system for evaluating and updating the children's progress. For example they update children's progress files from memory and do not use any written notes or pieces of children's work to support their assessment. This means that children's achievement may be missed. In addition there is no formal management monitoring system implemented to ensure that the learning program is being implemented fully at all times. This is because the board of trustees currently relies solely on the manager to ensure that the learning program is implemented as required.

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 complaint 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):

- revise the organisation of daily routines, such as snack times so that children are more fully engaged and can contribute more to the process
- establish a system where by the documentation and organisational systems are consistent across the different types of provision operated by the organisation. Ensure that the registered committee take a more active role in monitoring how these are implemented.

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):

- continue to develop and implement the planning and assessment systems to include observations of the children, which are then linked to the individual child's next steps for learning
- consider ways for children to enjoy more opportunities to explore and express their creativity on a daily basis.

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