

Dene House Sure Start Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY345360
Inspection date	02 November 2007
Inspector	Vivienne Dempsey
Setting Address	Manor Way, Peterlee, County Durham, SR8 5RL
Telephone number	0191 5181584
E-mail	sunshinedaynursery@eurotel.broadband.com
Registered person	Katherine Hardman & Anne Arrowsmith
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sure Start Children's Centre, Peterlee (Dene House) opened in 2003. It operates on the site of Dene House Primary School in the Dene house ward of Peterlee. It is one of two provisions operated by this individual provider. Care is provided from three rooms in a purpose-built building. Nursery education is provided in one room. A maximum of 76 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 8.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. Additional services include wrap around care for children aged up to eight years. Sessional care provides support for parents attending groups within the centre.

All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 81 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll; of these 37 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a close catchment area, as most of their parents live locally. There are 17 staff who work with the children. All members of staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications, two members of staff are working towards a higher qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very clean and spacious environment. Appropriate sick children, medication and accident procedures are in place and consent has been gained from parents for seeking any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment. This ensures children's health needs are well met.

Children's health is promoted because staff mainly follow good health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, staff wear protective clothing when serving food and changing nappies. Children are encouraged to follow some good personal hygiene routines as they wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet. They are beginning to understand the reason why they need to do so. However, they do not always wash their hands before eating their snack. This means good hygiene practices are not always promoted.

Healthy eating is very well promoted. Children receive varied and nutritious meals and snacks and have fresh fruit each day. Drinking water is readily available throughout the day. This helps children remain nourished and hydrated.

Children enjoy a range of physical activities that contribute to their good health. They have access to the outdoor play areas, which have some safety surface in place. Children enjoy running, climbing and sliding. Younger children have fun making lots of sounds banging pans and metal tubes. Children can rest or be active according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a child centred, warm and welcoming environment where risks are regularly identified and minimised. Therefore children are able to move around safely, freely and confidently. They have independent access to a extremely good range of toys, equipment and furniture, which are appropriate to the children's developmental stages and interests, keeping them motivated and interested at all times.

An emergency evacuation procedure is in place, regular fire drills are practiced and a written log is maintained. This develops children's awareness of fire safety. The premises are secure, a visitors log is in place and there are clear lost and uncollected child policies in place. All of which promotes children's safety.

Staff have a good understanding of their role and responsibilities regarding child protection and have attended training in this area. Comprehensive procedures are in place, including the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against staff. This means the welfare of children is protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The setting is currently piloting funded places for the children who are two years old. Children are happy and confident within the setting. They arrive eager to attend and settle well. Children enjoy close and warm relationships with staff who know them well, which increases their sense

of belonging. Staff provide good levels of support which enable the children to experience a wide range of activities that contribute to their development and learning. For example, children enjoy hiding under the green stretchy fabric held by staff while they sing 'where are the children', playing sound lotto and looking for worms in the outdoor area.

Children have access to a variety of activities that are well planned by staff. There is a good balance between adult-directed and child-initiated activities. Plans for younger children incorporate the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff have received training in this area and are implementing the framework competently. For example, children explore natural and sensory materials during heuristic play sessions and enjoy using the 'walk-in' sand area.

Children's communication skills are developing well as staff respond well to babies early vocalisations and talk and listen to children during their play. Staff are interested in what children do and say and join in with their activities appropriately in order to promote children's all round development. They observe children's development and learning and use these to inform future planning and next steps in children's learning.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The setting has a full time teacher in place who works with staff to implement the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff have a strong understanding and knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use this to plan an interesting and varied programme of activities across the curriculum. The pre-school room is set out very well, creating an interesting, stimulating and accessible learning environment. Assessment records and observations are completed regularly and children's progress is linked to the stepping stones. These are dated to show children's individual progress and are used very well to inform planning in order to meet children's individual learning needs.

Children have a good level of independence in selecting and carrying out activities. They show high levels of curiosity and are interested in what they do. For example, children enjoy listening to the rain bouncing down the drain pipe and with staff support clap to mirror the sound it makes. Children persist for extended periods of time in their chosen activities. They become increasingly independent when dealing with their own physical needs, such as putting their coats on before they go outside to keep themselves warm and dry. They have independent access to the snack table where they pour their own water or milk and choose their own snack.

Children enjoy a range of story and book sharing opportunities, they handle books carefully, hold them correctly and turn pages. They enthusiastically retell the story of Fireman Sam and how he made a rescue with the helicopter and it's winch. Staff provide a wide variety of opportunities for children to develop their mark making skills. For example, children enjoy writing for a purpose and have fun writing the ingredients for the Halloween soup which includes 'witches fingers', 'worms', 'dinosaur poo' and 'witches noses', respectively asparagus, green beans, potatoes and carrots.

Staff encourage children to use counting within their daily activities, such as counting how many blocks they have used to build a tower and how many worms they have made in the dough area. Children compare the size of the worms they have made and are able to use size language appropriately.

Children have a wide range of opportunities to explore and investigate, they enjoy taking an old phone to pieces and exploring 'how it works'. Staff provide a range of natural objects for children to explore, for example, fur cones, shells, pebbles and leaves. Children have access to

a computer and some children are able to complete simple programmes. Staff provide other opportunities for children to develop their awareness of the technology around them, such as using a digital camera, programmable and remote control toys.

Children enjoy a range of physical activities, they use the outdoor climbing frame and slide and have fun moving to music. However, access to the outdoor area is limited and not always freely accessible. This limits children's opportunity to develop their large physical skills. Opportunities are available for children to develop their fine motor skills as they use single handed tools and utensils with increasing competence. For example, scissors, glue sticks and paint brushes. Children use their imagination very well in role play, for example, they enjoy packing their suitcase to go on holiday and making cups of tea for each other and staff. They have lots of fun using a range of musical instruments from around the world rhythmically and sing and dance spontaneously throughout the session.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the setting and participate fully in all activities because staff know children well and value and respect their individuality. Children access a good range of activities and resources which increase their awareness of diversity and develop a positive attitude to others. For example, they enjoy celebrating a range of festivals such as Eid, Divalli, Halloween and Chinese New Year.

The setting has clear procedures in place to support and integrate children with physical and learning difficulties. The named coordinator has completed relevant training. Some children also have the support of an inclusion worker to ensure they are fully included and their individual needs are met.

Children are very well behaved. There is a clear behaviour management policy in place. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of how to manage children's behaviour and the children receive lots of positive praise and encouragement. This means children's spiritual moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with parents. Information about the child's individual needs is actively sought from parents before the child starts. Information is displayed on a notice board and regular newsletters are issued to parents regarding activities within the setting. Parents have some opportunities to discuss their child's progress and have open access to their child's development file. The settings policies and procedures are readily accessible to them. However, information about the Foundation Stage curriculum is limited.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Effective recruitment and appointment procedures are used to ensure staff working with children are appropriately cleared and have suitable qualifications. Health checks are also undertaken which enhance vetting procedures. Staff provide a well organised environment which contributes to the children being happy and settled. The space both indoors and outdoors supports children's learning and development, allowing them to move around freely and independently. There is an effective key worker system in place and adult-to-child ratios are correctly maintained.

There are detailed, comprehensive policies and procedures in place. They are shared with staff and are readily available to parents. All required documents are available for inspection and are stored confidentially.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Children benefit from the commitment of the management and the centre's team to provide good quality education. Most staff have early years qualifications and all have up to date first aid certificates. The management actively encourage staff to attend relevant training opportunities. The knowledge gained by staff is used to enhance the care that is given to children. The staff team share responsibility for the delivery of the curriculum. Weekly meetings ensure staff work closely together to plan and develop the provision they provide.

The management have high expectations of staff and are very committed to improving and developing the provision. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how children learn and work well as a team to provide a range of interesting and meaningful activities. There is a staff appraisal system in place and regular staff meetings are held. This enables the management to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the provision.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

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):

- further develop good hygiene practices by encouraging children to wash their hands before snack.

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 access to the outdoor area for children to further develop their physical skills further
- ensure that parents are informed about the 'Foundation Stage' curriculum.

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