

# Seymour Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY230750
<b>Inspection date</b>	04 March 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Carla Owen
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Seymour Kindergarten is a private day nursery that opened in 1986 and was taken over by the present owner in 2003. It operates from two rooms in a detached house in Crumpsall, Manchester and serves the local area. There is a secure outdoor area.

There are 26 children under five years on roll and of these nine are funded for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 07.30 until 18.00.

A total of nine part-time and full-time staff work with the children. All staff have an early years qualification to level 2 or above. The setting receives support from the Sure Start Partnership.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning good hygiene routines as they are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times of the day, such as before eating and after toileting. However, there is currently no hot running water available for the children. Staff follow satisfactory procedures to promote children's good health, for example, cleaning tables with anti-bacterial sprays and ensuring the toilets are adequately stocked for children to use. An effective sick child policy is in place which excludes any children with infectious illnesses from the setting and staff contact parents when children become ill. Clear procedures are in place for the administration of medication and records are correctly maintained. Babies and young children are secure with consistent routines, for example, sleep and feeding routines are followed in line with home routines. These are recorded in a daily diary to keep parents informed about their children. This promotes children's health and sense of security.

Information regarding children's dietary requirements are obtained upon entry to the nursery, and taken into account when planning menus. This ensures that children's dietary needs are successfully met at all times. Meals are freshly cooked on the premises each day and include fresh fruit and vegetables. The menu is well balanced and nutritious to promote children's growth and development and promotes cultural diversity as food from different countries is also included. Children's independence skills are promoted as they are provided with appropriate cutlery when eating their meals. Fresh drinking water is readily available to the children throughout the nursery, thus, helping them to keep themselves hydrated and refreshed throughout the day.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a welcoming and stimulating environment, where their independent artwork is clearly displayed giving them a good sense of belonging within the nursery. Playrooms benefit from lots of natural light and are maintained at an appropriate temperature, further ensuring children's comfort. Quiet areas are easily accessible to all children, enabling them to rest, play quietly or simply to have some time to themselves. Toys are of a good standard and are stored at children's height to allow them to develop their independence and make choices in their play. A cleaning rota ensures all toys and equipment are cleaned regularly and are safe for children's use.

Children are generally well protected from hazards due to risk assessments carried out by staff both indoors and outdoors and written policies concerning safety. However, some areas, such as plug sockets and hazardous substances are not highlighted within the risk assessments which results in these areas being missed. Fire evacuation procedures are clearly displayed and drills are carried out on a regular basis, ensuring children are aware of how to follow defined procedures in the event of a fire or emergency evacuation. Entrances and exits are kept locked at all times and safety precautions, such as fire detection equipment and a visitors' book further contributes to the protection of children.

Children's welfare is fully safeguarded as staff have a good awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and are clear on the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy their time at the nursery. They benefit from a key worker system, which enables them to receive consistent care from adults who know them well. The staff generally interact well with the children and are supportive to their individual needs. For example, children who are upset are given lots of reassurance and cuddles.

Staff have a sound awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and plan a suitable range of activities and experiences for children. Children make steady progress in their learning as staff make regular observations which they use to inform future plans. A 'learning journey' is currently being developed to record children's progress which will then be shared with parents. They engage in creative and messy activities with adult support, such as painting and gluing and sticking and have great fun as they explore the textures of gloop, sand and the contents of the treasure baskets. Children are developing language skills as they listen to stories and sing familiar songs. They express themselves freely as they move their bodies to music and create different rhythms and sounds using musical instruments.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make steady progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a growing awareness of the Foundation Stage and early learning goals, which is reflected in the varied range of play opportunities planned and provided for the children. The planning of the continuous provision throughout the sessions covers all six areas of learning, which ensures children receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Planning is linked to topics and covers all areas of learning. However, these do not include clear learning intentions and planning of focused activities does not show how activities are adapted to meet the individual needs of more or less able children. There are currently no clear assessments of children and their progress is not effectively monitored which results in gaps in children's learning not being identified. Consequently, the links between planning, assessments and observations are not yet complete. A range of teaching methods is used to meet the needs of the children.

Children have good opportunities to practise forming recognisable letters, for example, they practise writing the first letter of their name in shaving foam and sand play. They are also beginning to learn to link sounds to letters through use of a phonics scheme. However, staff do not have a clear knowledge and understanding of how children learn which results in some planned activities not being appropriate for the age and stage of the children's development. They learn that print carries meaning as objects around the room are labelled and time is set aside each day for children to listen to a story.

Children are secure and happy within the pre-school. They have formed good relationships with staff and peers and confidently express their needs. They show an interest in learning and concentrate for long periods of time. For example, children sit and attempt to match the correct pieces of a letter puzzle together. They smile with delight as they correctly match the pieces and beam when praise is given by staff.

Children have some opportunities to explore their immediate environment. For example, they are asked to find items in the room which are red. They enthusiastically search the rooms with support from staff and place the items on the 'red' table. Children also observe growth and change as they learn about the life cycle of a butterfly and plant seeds and watch them grow.

Activities, such as comparing changes in their appearance since they were babies and drawing what they see when they look in the mirror, helps them to develop a sense of time and an awareness of themselves. There are limited opportunities, however, for children to learn about their local environment.

Children's physical development is promoted through use of a range of equipment both indoors and outdoors. For example, many children use tools competently when drawing, colouring or practising letter formation and develop their coordination through dance, climbing and balancing activities. Children are also gaining spatial awareness and learning how their bodies change as they exercise.

Music is promoted as children sing familiar songs and create rhythms using musical instruments. Children are able to use their imagination, for example, a 'shop' is set up for the children. They dress up in different costumes and pay for items. Children also use their imagination as they play with small world toys. Children are able to express themselves creatively within the pre-school as they paint pictures and have access to a wide range of creative resources. They explore different textures, such as gloop, sand and different materials and explore colour as they mix different coloured paints together.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are warmly greeted on arrival making them feel welcome. Children are generally confident and develop good levels of self-esteem. They are aware of the daily routine and have some opportunities to take responsibilities within this, such as helping to tidy up. Children learn about diversity and the wider world through a range of resources that promote positive images and respect for equality of opportunity. They learn about different cultures and countries as they celebrate special events from different religions. Children are generally well behaved. Most staff use appropriate strategies to manage children's behaviour, such as distraction for younger children and explanations for older children. Children are all praised, encouraged and reassured according to their needs. Younger children learn to share, take turns and play together cooperatively following adult guidance. Therefore, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents are warmly welcomed into the nursery at the beginning and end of each day. Informal chats along with the daily diary helps to keep them up to date with their children's care. Information on the staff employed at the nursery is displayed which keeps parents informed on the staff caring for their children. Policies and procedures are made available, keeping parents fully informed of practices which operate within the nursery. Planning documents and information on the components of the 'Birth to three matters' framework are displayed, allowing parents to develop an awareness of the curriculum being delivered to their children. Discussions with parents indicate that they are happy with the service provided. They clearly value the 'friendly staff' and feel very well informed of the care which is provided for their children.

The partnership with parents and carers in receipt of nursery education is satisfactory. Information is given to parents about the Foundation Stage curriculum during their initial introduction to the nursery. Planning documents are displayed and children are asked to bring items from home related to their current topics which promotes positive links between home and nursery. Parents are currently not fully informed about their children's progress in their learning and are not asked to contribute to assessments which prevents them being fully involved in their children's learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Sound procedures are in place for the recruitment and vetting of new staff to the nursery. A good induction system is in place, which forms a firm basis for staff employment. Contingency arrangements are in place to cover for staff shortages. Children are cared for by a team of staff who are well qualified. Space is well organised to provide children with a balanced range of activities to support their learning. Staffing levels are organised, to ensure the nursery is within the required ratios and that children receive an appropriate level of attention and support. A thorough self-evaluation system has recently been introduced to ensure all areas of the National Standards are effectively met in order to improve the quality of care.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. There is a strong commitment to improvement and staff are able to identify their training needs through annual appraisals and regular staff meetings. The owner and deputy manager work closely with the local authority and other outside agencies in order to improve the quality of the provision. The system for monitoring the provision of nursery education is not rigorous, which results in gaps in the provision and children's learning. However, the deputy manager does spend some time within the pre-school room observing and discussing issues with staff.

Most required documentation is in place, of a high standard, shared with parents and stored to respect confidentiality. However, an omission has been identified; there is currently no member of staff on the premises with a valid first aid certificate. This is a breach of regulations. However, the nursery has recently taken steps to ensure staff are placed on a course in the very near future.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

During the last inspection the provider was asked to improve the following: the vetting procedures for staff; the grouping of the children; the documentation; the provision of fresh drinking water; the management of children's behaviour; the condition of the outdoor area; the procedures for identifying risks and hazards. Some progress has been made. The provider is currently in the process of re-checking all staff to ensure their continued suitability to work with children. Children are now arranged into key worker groups to ensure there is a consistent adult working with them. Most required documentation is in place and of a good standard. Fresh drinking water has been made available in the main playroom for children to access it independently. The behaviour management policy has been reviewed and shared with staff to ensure they are clear on how to effectively manage children's behaviour. The outdoor area has been made safer for the children through erecting new secure fencing but this is still an ongoing project within the nursery to make the outdoor area more attractive for children. Written risk assessments are in place for areas used by children, however, these do not effectively cover all areas which results in some potential hazards not being identified.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standard 1, Suitable person. The concerns were originally shared with another agency. A childcare inspector from Ofsted Early Years then visited the provision on 14 March 2007, and a further monitoring visit took place on 19 April 2007. Actions were raised and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. Ofsted also received concerns regarding National Standard 13, Child Protection. The concerns were originally shared

with another agency. A childcare inspector visited the provision on 25 June 2007. No actions were raised as a result of the visit and Ofsted are satisfied that the provider remains qualified for registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents which they may 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 written risk assessments cover all areas used by children to ensure all potential risks are identified
- ensure there is at least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate on the premises.

#### **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):

- develop planning systems to ensure clear learning intentions are identified and activities are differentiated to meet the needs of the more and less able children
- ensure assessment systems are implemented to record and monitor children's progress
- develop a system to ensure parents are kept fully informed about their children's progress
- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of how children learn and devise an effective system for monitoring the quality of the nursery education delivered.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)