

Spring Park

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY262887
Inspection date	09 January 2008
Inspector	Janice Linsdell
Setting Address	Muirhead Avenue East, Liverpool, Merseyside, L11 1ER
Telephone number	0151 226 8600
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Registered person	Spring Park
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?

Spring Park Nursery opened in July 2003. It is run by an organisation and operates from purpose built premises situated in the Croxteth Park area of Liverpool. Children are cared for in three rooms located on two floors. The nursery is open each week day from 08.00 to 18.00, all year round. A maximum of 88 children may attend the nursery at any one time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 101 children aged from birth to under five years on roll, of these, 23 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 21 members of staff including the manager, of these, 19 hold appropriate qualifications in early years and the remaining two members of staff are working toward a recognised qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is very well promoted because staff consistently follow hygienic practices to maintain a clean and healthy environment, for example, they disinfect equipment regularly and wear aprons and gloves to serve food. Children wash their hands as part of the daily routine and the attractive posters and photographs displayed remind them how to do this properly. Nappy changing procedures are very hygienic and babies dummies are stored in individual pots which are clearly labelled. This helps to reduce the spread of germs and protect children from illness. Staff follow correct procedures when dealing with children's accidents or when administering medication, although parental signatures are not always obtained to acknowledge the entry. Some staff are trained in first aid and food hygiene, which further benefits children's health and well-being.

The owner takes responsibility for preparing meals for the children and she has completed training in basic food hygiene. All food is home-cooked using mostly fresh ingredients, which means children receive a good variety of healthy and nutritious meals, including plenty of fresh fruit served with all meals and snacks. Fresh drinking water is readily available to the children in all rooms. Drinks of milk or water are offered with meals and the nursery does not provide juice, which promotes good dental care.

Outside play is organised so that children can play outdoors in the fresh air at least twice a day, although no outdoor play was observed during the inspection. The spacious garden provides opportunities for children to use the climbing frame, various wheeled toys and small equipment, such as balls and hoops. This promotes children's physical development and coordination skills. Also different professionals attend the nursery on a weekly basis to conduct physical education and dance sessions with the children, therefore promoting their strength and fitness.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are safe, welcoming and spacious, with well resourced playrooms for the children to enjoy. All rooms have a wide range of good quality play materials, which are clean, safe and well maintained. A section of the garden is laid with a safety surface to help minimise risks when children play outdoors. There is also a covered area to protect children from the sun during hot weather. The children's bathrooms do not have toilet doors, which has an impact on maintaining privacy for older children, but the owner is looking to address this in the near future.

There are some very effective measures in place to promote children's safety and security, for example, surveillance cameras are located throughout the nursery and all rooms are connected via the intercom system. Children are closely supervised and staff conduct weekly risk assessments to ensure any hazards are quickly identified and addressed.

Children develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe because staff frequently remind them of the safety rules in place, for example, children are requested not to run indoors and to be gentle when using resources in case they hurt others. Children's welfare is well safeguarded because staff are clear about their role in ensuring children's safety and protection from harm. Extensive information regarding safeguarding procedures is available to support

staff in dealing with concerns and guidance leaflets are also made available to parents in the entrance hall.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff interact well with the children and develop friendly, caring and supportive relationships with them. They create a stimulating environment, where children are busy and involved in their play. As a result, children are happy, secure and confident to participate in the good variety of activities on offer to promote their learning and enjoyment.

Children take part in sensory activities using various resources, such as jelly, baked beans and shredded paper. They join in with enthusiasm as they sing songs using the musical instruments. They enjoy making ice and exploring what happens when this is later added to the sand, showing much delight as it melts in their hands. Staff promote children's learning using their senses, for example, encouraging them to smell and guess what it is for lunch, or to listen out for the birds singing.

The 'Birth to three matters' framework is consistently well implemented to promote the care and development of young children. Staff plan for individual children, taking into account their needs and interests. They regularly observe and monitor children's progress and share summary sheets with parents to keep them well informed. Babies show interest in their environment as they explore different toys with good staff support. They enjoy building towers using the soft blocks and show their pleasure as they practise throwing the ball. Children show interest as they select books to look at, use construction materials to build models or join in with sponge painting activities.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress in their learning. They are developing social relationships with their peers as they play cooperatively together, share resources and use good manners. Their self-care skills are beginning to develop well as they see to their own personal needs. Children show increasing confidence in communicating with each other and adults, such as during circle time when they share news and listen when others are speaking. They practise their writing skills and show good pencil control as they draw their own pictures. The good use of print and labelling around the room helps children to recognise numbers, letters and familiar words.

Children learn about measurement as they enjoy working together to fill different containers with sand. They take part in group games, such as matching pictures on cards and comparing similarities and differences. Children are beginning to develop some understanding of numbers and counting, but opportunities to extend their understanding of simple calculation are sometimes missed. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world has developed very well. They talk about important events in their lives and have use of a computer to promote their skills in using technology. They learn about their own community and wider world through planned activities, such as 'people who help us' and by celebrating cultural festivals. Regular visits from the French teacher encourages children to learn some basic words in French.

Children competently climb the stairs each day to access their room and use some large play equipment in the outdoor area, which helps to promote their physical development. They show skill when using small tools, such as pencils, or when taking part in creative activities, such as

painting with string. They use their imagination very well to develop their own play, for example, they use the book area to pretend to go on a bus journey and make cakes in the sand, sprinkling 'magic fairy dust' on the top. They are able to express themselves using a variety of media, such as water, paint and musical instruments.

Staff working with funded children are qualified in early years and attend additional training to support them in their role. This enables them to demonstrate secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The pre-school room is well organised to promote all areas of learning and provide a variety of positive learning opportunities for children. Staff work together to discuss and plan activities for children to enjoy. They observe and record children's play and learning, but observations carried out are sometimes infrequent. Assessment records are completed regularly to record children's progress, but these are not always used effectively to identify gaps in children's learning and to inform future plans.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff meet the individual needs of the children well and involve them in making choices and decisions for themselves. They are sensitive and supportive in promoting the welfare and development of children who may have learning difficulties. Some staff have attended training in sign language and this is used throughout the setting to aid communication. There are some good quality posters displayed and various resources available to help raise children's awareness and understanding of diversity.

Children's behaviour is good and they are learning to share and take turns in their play. They have some opportunities to develop their independence skills, but this is not always fully promoted, for example, at mealtimes. Staff use praise effectively and award stickers to acknowledge children's efforts and achievements. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff keep parents well informed and consistently share verbal and written information about the children's day. There is an extensive range of information made available to parents in the entrance hall, including various leaflets, notice boards and questionnaires inviting parental feedback. Parents of funded children are provided with some good information about the curriculum and activity planning. Formal opportunities however, for parents to discuss children's progress, view their assessment records and become actively involved in their learning at home are somewhat limited. Parents speak positively about the nursery, commenting that it is a 'fun place to be' for the children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery is well organised, with consistent staff deployed effectively in each room to meet the needs of the children. Evidence is available to confirm nearly all staff have completed relevant checks to ensure their suitability to work with children, with two staff in the process of updating their checks. The number of qualified staff well exceeds minimum requirements and all staff continue to attend a wide range of additional training to support them in their role. Adult to child ratios are generally maintained, except over the lunch time period, but sufficient staff usually remain on the premises and can be called upon if required. The manager is also supernumerary and available to provide cover.

All documentation to promote children's care and welfare is readily accessible, well organised and generally well maintained, although there are sometimes inconsistencies in the maintenance of daily registers in each room. Effective policies and procedures are in place and implemented well by staff. These are regularly reviewed, updated and made available to parents on request.

Leadership and management is good. There is a strong commitment to achieving high standards in the nursery and the manager is proactive in ensuring any issues are quickly addressed. She welcomes the advice and support from outside agencies and works with them to monitor and improve the educational provision. Effective systems are implemented to support and develop the staff team, for example, ongoing professional development is actively encouraged, regular staff appraisals are carried out and all staff have contributed to evaluating practice using the self evaluation form. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the nursery has provided parents with information regarding the complaints procedure, displaying relevant details in the entrance hall. Also the child protection policy has been updated in line with requirements. This has improved procedures and helps to promote children's care and welfare. The range of resources and activities have been increased to enhance children's understanding and awareness of diversity. The manager has designated responsibility for behaviour management and has attended relevant training to support her in this role, which ensures children's behaviour is managed appropriately.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standard 2 (Organisation). The provider was required to carry out an internal investigation, which resulted in one action being raised. This was appropriately addressed and the provider remains qualified for registration.

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):

- review the procedures for recording medication, so that parents consistently sign the record to acknowledge the entry

- ensure that daily registers showing children's hours of attendance are accurately 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):

- use children's assessment records more effectively to identify any gaps in their learning and to assist in future planning, so that children's individual learning needs are addressed
- further develop systems to inform parents about children's progress in their learning, and how parents can become involved in their learning at home.

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