

# South Street Family Unit

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 107045   |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 28 February 2008                                 |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Yvonne Campbell                                  |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | South Street, Bedminster, Bristol, Avon, BS3 3AU |
| <b>Telephone number</b>        | 0117 903 9941                                    |
| <b>E-mail</b>                  |  |
| <b>Registered person</b>       | Bristol City Council                             |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated                                       |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | Full day care, Sessional 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 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?

South Street Family Unit is a part of the Early Years and Child Care Services provided by the local authorities. It opened in 1998 and operates from separate rooms in South Street Primary School Bedminster, Bristol. A maximum of 17 children may attend the unit at any one time. Opening times are Monday to Friday from 09.15 to 15.00. The unit is open all year round except for bank holidays, staff training days and a week over Christmas. Children attend sessions from 09.15 to 12.45 or from 11.30 to 15.00. Places are allocated by a panel made up of workers from education, health and child care departments.. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 15 children on roll from two to under five years old. Of these, three receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area and the unit supports a number of 'Children in Need' and some who have specific learning needs.

The unit employs four staff who work directly with the children. All including the joint managers have Level 3 qualifications. One manager has a Level 4 qualification and the other is working

towards a Foundation Stage degree. The group has achieved validation for the Bristol Standard for Childcare quality assurance scheme.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted as they are cared for on premises which are cleaned regularly and there are procedures in place to prevent cross contamination and the spread of germs. A cleaner employed by the local authorities cleans the rooms and toilets each day. The carpet sections are steamed cleaned periodically. Areas and equipment used by children are kept in clean condition and throughout the day tables are cleaned after activities and before snacks and meals. Different coloured cloths are used for the tables, floors and paint spillages so that germs are not introduced across areas.

Children are learning to follow good hygiene practices and they are familiar with the routine for washing their hands before meals and after going to the toilet. Staff show children good examples by washing their hands at the same time as the children and by engaging them in talk about the procedure. Children know that they must clean the surface which has paint spillages and they enjoy wiping the paint off with damp cloths which they wash out in a bowl. Staff use this as a learning opportunity to show children that the dirt has now gone into the water.

Children's medical needs are generally met well. A medication procedure is in place and parents give prior written consent for any prescription medication that children need during the session. Children who are ill are excluded to prevent infection spreading to others and parents are informed if children are away with certain types of illnesses. Children have attention to minor injuries they sustain during play. A first aid box is accessible in the unit. All accidents are recorded and parents are informed. However, there is no member of staff in the unit who has a current first aid certificate and there may be a delay in treating children as the qualified first aid staff are located in the main school.

Children's dietary needs are met through discussion with parents. Staff are aware of dietary needs are different eating habits. For example, some children have small breakfasts whilst others have late breakfast. Children have light and satisfying snacks of crackers and are given choices of spreads including cheese, jam or Marmite. They also choose from pieces of fresh fruit which is prepared at the table. Children are developing physical skills of holding and using metal knives safely as they butter their own crackers and add the toppings. Snack and meals times are happy social occasions which children share with their peers and also with staff who sit with the children and encourage them to eat or to try new things. Drinking water is provided regularly at meal and snack times. Staff also encourage children to drink in between by offering them drinks. However, although they have sufficient drinks, water is not accessible at all times so children rely on adults to prompt them to drink.

Children's have a range of energetic activities which promotes the growth of their bodies and the development of physical skills. They have outdoor play in the large playground where they have ample space to run around and expend energy whilst playing with balls, of various sizes and hoops. They are also developing large muscle strength using mobile equipment such as tricycle and coordinate the movement of their limbs to climb the apparatus in the playground.

Children also have opportunities to develop fine motor skills and hand to eye coordination as they thread beads and learn to use large needles to sew during craft activities.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and welcoming environment where staff have a good understanding of hazards and risks and have taken action to ensure children and parents feel secure. The entrance hall is inviting with photos of children at play. Each child has a coat peg with their name and photograph. Children's sense of belonging is further enhanced as they have a storage basket where they store small items of personal belongings. The main room is thoughtfully set out to stimulate different types of play. For example, there is a social corner and a shop is available for children to recall and act out their experiences at home and in the community through imaginative play. There is also a comfortable book corner and an art area. A large and well maintained notice board is accessible to parents in the entrance area and they feel free to stay and read the information as a room with comfortable chairs is accessible to them.

Children have access to a varied range of interesting toys and play equipment to support learning in all areas of development. These include materials for art and craft, construction items and natural materials such as wood and shells of different shapes and sizes. All materials are safe and fit for purpose as they are purchased from reputable educational suppliers and staff make regular checks to ensure that broken or hazardous items are not present.

The premises are secure and children are kept safe as unwanted visitors do not have access to the unit. Parents and carers ring a bell which is linked to an intercom system. The risk of injury to children from the environment is considerably reduced as a thorough risk assessment carried out both indoors and outdoors. This ensures that children can play and explore in safety. Risk assessments are also carried out for trips and outings. Most children have experienced the evacuation procedure and staff are aware of their role and responsibility for getting children out of the unit quickly in an emergency. A fire drill is practised periodically with the school and carried out according to local authority standards. The fire plan is displayed in several areas and is easy to access for reference.

Children's well-being is safeguarded and promoted as staff have a very good working knowledge of the safeguarding children procedure and work to protect children and support parents. There are close links with care professionals and staff have up-to-date training on the issues around child abuse and occasionally attend and contribute to case conferences held by Children and Young People Services. A statement on safeguarding children is accessible to parents and a comprehensive policy from the local authority is also in the operational plan and is available to parents on request.

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

The provision is good.

Children feel secure and valued as staff are very knowledgeable about their play and development needs and enable children to play and learn through activities they enjoy. Younger children have close physical contact with staff who when appropriate give hugs and lots of praise and encouragement. A sense of choice and independence is fostered amongst the children and staff record which toys children like to use during free play and then extend individual learning aims through similar items. For example, one child shows a strong preference for being precise

in his actions and enjoys setting toys out in lines. Staff ensure that he has access to items he can line up and link together including, a wooden train track and small carriages. He concentrates on the task for a lengthy period of time and takes pride in the completed product. The child was allowed to collect the milk for afternoon snack and he immediately lined up the boxes at equal distances apart with all the straws facing inwards showing good awareness of space and pattern.

### Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy being together in the small group and they are happy to play alongside others and take turns when necessary. Staff have organised the room well to provide children with engrossing play which keep them happy and fully occupied. Children make choices as staff encourage the development of their independence and positive self esteem. They have some control over the day's routines and activities as staff are flexible when implementing plans. For example, after being indoors for a while, a member of staff suggests it may be a good idea to go outdoors and take the paints and easel. Most children were eager to have outside play. One child who was initially reluctant is not forced but is gently persuaded to join the group outdoors later on. Children are encouraged to think about and to arrive at solutions to problems they experience during play. When children experience disappointment, staff move alongside them and offer encouragement which enables them to restart play and to persevere with challenges.

Children's language development is promoted through talk and they express their ideas during play. They enjoy familiar stories and know that print has meaning as they have access to many story books and various labels with symbols. Children also enjoy mark making with crayons and felt tips and post letters into the large letterbox in the room. Mathematical language is used in every day activities such as counting out the number of wipes needed and children fit random numbers on a number tree as part of a game. A number line is displayed in the toilet. However, the alphabet and a number line are not displayed in a sufficiently prominent part of the learning environment and this may impact on children not recognising, repeating and practising their understanding of letters and numbers.

Children show curiosity and explore their surrounding with specialist equipment. They use a magnifying glass to closer examine items in the room and magnets are used to attract and repel metal objects. They are developing ideas about invisible forces and use large and small magnets to lift keys of various sizes and place them in boxes of different shapes and sizes. Children know how to operate simple information technology equipment. They use the computer to complete age-appropriate programmes and know to manoeuvre and click the mouse correctly. They are also familiar with telephones, cash registers and use these during imaginative play in the shop and social corner.

Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan suitable activities to promote children's individual learning needs. They also ensure that children have resources which they enjoy using. Children's progress records are well maintained and show, observation, photographs and short learning stories. Staff are proactive when planning for children's future learning and they have begun to make the transition to the forthcoming Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

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

The provision is good.

Children are thriving emotionally and intellectually as their individual needs are recognised and met by the ethos of care and support which is prevalent in the unit. Staff engage parents in initial and ongoing discussions about children. Other care professionals also share information about what children need and there are regular reviews of care to ensure children's stated needs and targets are being met. Children learn about different people and cultures through activities which acknowledge cultural festivals. For example, during the recent Chinese New Year celebrations, children tasted noodles and prawn crackers during cookery. They used utensils associated with the culture such as, bowls and chopsticks. Children also completed paintings of Chinese writing and danced to oriental music.

Children behave well as acceptable behaviour is recognised and staff praise children often to affirm they are doing the right thing. Children are informed about the routine and staff let children know when change is about to take place such as, five minutes to snack time or clearing up time. Visual timetables with symbols are used for children who have autism to ensure they can see what happens next by looking at the symbols. Staff are good role models for children and they treat children respectfully by making polite requests and saying please and thank you when appropriate. They occasionally remind some children to be polite to others and to say please. Children are allowed to be involved in messy play without fear of reproof. They enjoy clearing up spillages and know they must look after the outdoor area and remove washable paint from the equipment at the end of the session.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are developing awareness of changes in the life-cycle of plants during gardening activities and have a sense of their own culture through the recognitions of special times including birthdays and Christmas. They have a sense of moral behaviour as staff encourage them to consider the effect their action may have on others. For example, when a child paints the slide, staff engage him in discussion about why it is not a good idea as other children will get paint on their trousers.

Parents are relaxed and feel at home in the unit when they drop off and collect their children. Staff are available to talk and parents are welcomed to spend time in a comfortable room which has facilities for making refreshments. As well as the parent information booklet, other relevant information is displayed on a large notice board. These include: policies, activity plans and photographs of the children at play. A large poster with the telephone number of the regulator is display. The unit's complaints policy is in keeping with procedures set out by the local authorities. However, it does not contain the address of the regulator.

Partnership with parents is good

Parents have awareness of the progress their children are making as this is done in regular review meeting which involves other professionals connected with individual families. Though few retain actual knowledge about the process of Foundation Stage they say that it has been explained to them. Several parents say their children have come on in 'leaps and bounds and some mentioned the marked improvement in their children's speech development and confidence. Children records are accessible to parents in individual folders which are kept in a designated area.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are making steady progress in their development as staff are experienced, suitably qualified and are knowledgeable about how inequalities may impact on children's life chances and learning. They show a clear understanding of their role and know the needs of the community well. This enables them to promote children's emotional well-being as a key aspect to learning and achieving. All members of staff are safe to be in close proximity to children as they have completed Criminal Records checks carried out by the local authority's personnel department who also ensure that qualification and identities are verified during the interview procedure.

Children have sufficient care and support as the adult to child ratio is maintained at all times at no less than one adult to four children. The record of attendance is maintained as required and contingency plans are in place for using familiar agency staff to cover staff absences. Records are thorough and are well set out in the operational plan. However, some documents displayed on the parents notice board do not have review dates and may appear to be outdated. Also one document has the name of a member of staff who is no longer in employment. In addition, the complaints procedure is incomplete as it does not contain the address of the regulator.

Leadership and management are good

There is a clear leadership structure in place and this small staff group value each other's strengths and work closely together to benefit children and their families. Staff sessions are held each morning before children arrive and a full staff meeting take place on Wednesdays. An annual staff appraisal system is in place and areas for individual training and development are identified so that the unit can continue to meet the needs of its client group. Staff also take part in training as a group and attend individual courses of their preference. They keep up to date with local and national child care initiatives and there are plans in place to increase the space available to the family unit in the school. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection staff agreed to a recommendation to review the arrangements for serving hot meals from the trolley in the parents room. They also agreed to a further recommendation to review the provision of cooked meals for children during times when the kitchen is closed during the school holidays.

The procedures for keeping children safe has now improved as hot meals are served from a trolley which is in a separate area and at a safe distance from the meal table. The provisions for meeting children's dietary needs has also improved as meals are no longer provided from the kitchen in the school and a specialist caterer now delivers lunches to the unit all year round.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required Ofsted or the provider 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 improve procedures for promoting children's good health and ensure that fresh drinking water is available to children at all times
- improve practices for meeting children's medical needs and ensure that at least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate is present in the unit and on outings, the qualification should include training in first aid for infants and young children
- further develop written policies and procedures and ensure that the complaint procedure contains the address of the regulator, also ensure the dates when policies are reviewed and recorded on the relevant documents and remove reference of any staff no longer working in the unit.

#### 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 children's access to core resources for stimulating counting and knowledge of the letters of the alphabet and provide and display number lines and the letters of the alphabet in a prominent place

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)