

Sunbeams Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	199434
Inspection date	22 May 2008
Inspector	Rachel Edwards

Setting Address	The Summerhouse, St Dunstan School, William Street, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 9BD
Telephone number	07960 022058
E-mail	
Registered person	Sunbeams Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of 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.

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?

Sunbeams Pre-School has been registered since 1972. It is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the pre-school and members of the local community. It operates from a mobile classroom in the grounds of St Dunstan Primary School, Calne. It serves the town and rural area.

Children use the main playroom which has its own toilets and kitchen area. They have use of the playground and adjacent grassy area for outside play. They also use the school hall for physical play. Sessions are from 09.00 to 11.30 Monday to Friday in term time only. The group also run a lunch club which finishes at 13.00. Children from the school nursery may also attend this.

The pre-school is registered to care for up to 22 children from two years to five years in the pre-school. There are 38 children on roll, 14 of whom currently receive nursery education funding. The group support children with additional needs.

There are four staff members who work with the children, three of whom hold a Level 3 and one a Level 2 qualification in early years. The pre-school is supported by the local authority early years advisory team.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are helped to keep fit and healthy whilst at the pre-school. Children play in premises that are cleaned professionally each day and staff follow good procedures to minimise the spread of cross infection. Staff support the young children very well as they learn about the importance of personal hygiene. As a result most children manage very well as they visit the toilets, wash hands and wipe their noses disposing of tissues in the bin. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that most children are successfully potty trained before leaving the setting. Staff keep their first aid training up to date and follow strict procedures when administering medication, consequently children receive appropriate care when they have an accident or are unwell.

Children benefit from and enjoy the range of healthy snacks that pre-school provides. They practise skills such as spreading and cutting and frequently enjoy fruit and vegetable sticks. Parents provide packed lunches and staff offer guidance on healthy items to include. Children sit together at meal times, and help to clean tables, prepare the food and clear away after. These sociable occasions encourage children to learn good social skills and to enjoy their food. Children are shown how to help themselves to fresh water throughout the day.

Children benefit from easy access to a large outdoor play area. There are plans to fence this securely so that children can safely choose whether to play inside or out throughout the session. Currently they go out twice each day for fresh air and vigorous exercise. The group also have the use of other parts of the school grounds, such as woodland area with a pond, which children enjoy exploring. They take part in a range of activities that develop their physical skills well.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in very suitable accommodation, which is bright and welcoming, with many lovely displays of children's art work and photographs mounted at children's eye level. These include children's thoughts on what makes them happy or sad and a display using waste materials as part of a topic on recycling. The pre-school has the use of school grounds but there is not a securely fenced area that would enable children to move freely between the indoor and outdoor area. Children benefit from the good range of high quality resources to support their care and learning.

Children play safely as the staff have effectively identified and minimised potential hazards. There are very effective systems in place to ensure that children are handed safely over to pre-school and returned to their main carers at the end of the session. Registers are promptly and accurately kept, so that staff are clear who is present at any time. Emergency evacuation procedures are understood by staff who practise them regularly with the children, which helps them learn to keep themselves safe.

Staff understand their responsibility to safeguard children's welfare and they have attended training in child protection. There are clear procedures to follow should there be concerns about a child with lines of responsibility clearly understood by all.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the pre-school very confidently, especially for such young children and those who are less certain are given very good support by the warm and caring staff. They settle quickly to their own chosen activity, which is usually outside at the beginning of the day, learning through practical, purposeful play. They are also eager to join in with planned activities led by the staff and there is a good balance between these and times of free play. Staff use guidance from the Birth to three framework and Foundation Stage curriculum to plan a range of indoor and outdoor activities that effectively cover all areas of children's development.

Children have very good relationships with each other and the adults who work with them, resulting in a happy, busy atmosphere. Staff clearly value children's achievements and contributions so that they are confident to express their ideas and try new experiences. Children are familiar with the daily routine as they hang their names to show they have arrived, tidy away toys and sit attentively for circle times. The room is well organised to enable children to become highly independent as they choose things they need and take care of their own personal hygiene.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The children, some of whom only spend a very short time in the pre-school before moving onto the school nursery class, make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage of their education. Staff plan a varied and interesting curriculum which covers the six areas of required learning well.

Children learn to listen carefully and distinguish different sounds, for which there is a planned activity each day. This good start helps the older children make very good progress in hearing sounds in words and beginning to link these to letters. A selection of topic themed books are well displayed in a comfortable reading area but staff do not sufficiently encourage children to look at these nor routinely read to them. They have plenty of opportunities to speak both in small and large groups and most are confident to do this. They relish the sounds and rhythms of new words and phrases, for example, a child is delighted with the phrase 'rushing round the corner', which he repeats over and over and uses in his play.

Children learn to count and recognise numerals but staff do not always use opportunities to help children develop their understanding of numbers through practical play. They recognise shapes well and reinforce their learning as they spot different shapes in their snack and make shape collages. Children have a growing awareness of the world around them and their natural curiosity is developed as they experiment with floating and sinking items or closely observe the giant snails that they help care for. They enjoy dressing up and play imaginatively, well supported by staff, who encourage them to develop a story line. Children with special educational needs are helped to progress well and individual plans meet their needs.

Staff monitor children's achievements. They frequently watch children playing and record what they can do. The records are well illustrated with photographs and examples of children's work so that a good assessment of their progress is made. However, staff do not always effectively

use this information to guide their planning and help them direct children's play to ensure they are appropriately challenged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children receive a warm welcome at this pre-school. Children with additional needs are given very good support so that they are fully included and helped to achieve as much as they can. Staff are responsible for small groups of children, which means they get to know the children and their families very well. Children demonstrate a strong sense of belonging as they greet staff on arrival and enjoy looking at photographs of themselves and their friends. The majority of children move on to the school nursery class, with which the pre-school has established close links, so that children make a smooth transition into school. They learn about their local community, for example through topics such as 'people who help us' and 'recycling'. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave very well. Staff gently remind them of the group's 'golden rules' and they promptly challenge any unwanted behaviour so that children consistently learn right from wrong. Staff have a very positive approach, regularly praising children's efforts and listening to what they say so that children feel good about themselves and know that their thoughts are valued.

The partnership with parents is good. The group have worked hard to make sure that parents receive good quality information about the pre-school and the educational provision. There are regular newsletters that inform parents of current topics and booklets outlining each area of the curriculum with suggestions for parents to continue with their child's learning at home. Copies of all the policies and procedures are readily available. Parents may ask to see their child's developmental records at any time and they are encouraged to add their own knowledge of their child's achievements. There are also two parents evenings each year when they can talk to staff about the children's progress. Parents are encouraged to help at sessions on a voluntary basis, which gives them a good opportunity to see how their children are learning through play.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

There are procedures in place to ensure that qualified and suitable adults work with the children and serve on the committee. However, the evidence for checks being carried out on all staff was not available at inspection, which is a breach of regulations. The play leader does not always have sufficient information about the clearance status of adults working with the children so there is a risk of children being left alone with unchecked adults. Children receive sufficient attention to feel confident and secure as the required staff ratios are always met. A full range of policies and procedures underpins the daily running of the pre-school and these are regularly reviewed and updated. Most of the required documentation is in place and stored confidentially, except for the evidence of staff clearances.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The staff try to meet regularly to discuss their practice and children's progress, although since changing to full day care they have had trouble finding sufficient time for this. Staff work well together as a team to ensure children make at least satisfactory progress. They create a suitable learning environment which allows children great freedom to follow their own interests. Annual staff

appraisals are carried out which staff value as an opportunity to identify training needs and their professional development is supported by the committee. They meet regularly with the qualified teacher from the school nursery and the local authority advisory teacher and development worker, who help them review and further improve their practice. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection, the group were required to take action to ensure they meet the National Standards for care. Several recommendations were also made to improve the quality of nursery education.

For care, these related to ensuring committee members undergo the relevant checks; ensuring there are sufficient staff working with the children; keeping fire exits clear; and ensuring the register is promptly taken. All these issues have been satisfactorily addressed.

For nursery education a recommendation was made to provide parents with more information about the curriculum and planned activities and explore ways of further involving them in their children's learning. Staff have worked hard to address this issue, so that parents now have access to good information about current topics and the different areas of children's learning, which includes suggestions for things they can do at home with their children.

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.

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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):

- make the outdoor area secure so that children can choose to move freely between the inside and outside areas (also applies to nursery education)
- make sure staff details, including evidence of suitability are available for inspection at all times
- ensure the supervisor has information about the suitability of adults working with the children

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 staff's knowledge of individual children's interests and progress to guide their play and provide opportunities that will appropriately challenge them

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