

Sunflower Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	221564
Inspection date	09/10/2008
Inspector	Veronica Sharpe

Setting address	2a Stretten Avenue, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB4 3EP
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

Sunflower Nursery is owned and managed by the Cambridge Housing Society. It is part of a residential development near to the centre of Cambridge and serves the local area including Housing Society tenants. The nursery is registered to accept no more than 42 children within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children use purpose built premises including a separate new baby unit. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. All areas of the nursery are easily accessible.

There are currently 59 children aged from four months to under five years on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens all year round, with the exception of bank holidays and some staff training days. Sessions are from 08:00 until 18:00.

16 full and part time staff work on roll, including office and domestic staff. Most of the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ Level 2 or 3 and all staff regularly attend training days and workshops.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The Sunflower Day Nursery offers good quality provision to children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Children and families are made welcome by staff who take time to greet children and adults by name. Excellent settling-in systems enable the children to build secure relationships with their key person and as a result they are happy and content. Generally, parents and carers receive good information about children's welfare through daily discussion and written reports.

The strong management team works in partnership with staff to review and improve the provision and as a result the setting's capacity to maintain continuous improvement is sound. Staff carry out their duties with dedicated enthusiasm; morale is high and they feel they play an active role in leadership and management processes.

Observations, assessment and planning are flexible and responsive to children's changing needs, which means they continue to be challenged and engaged in their learning. Resources are plentiful and suitably organised so children can access them independently so they follow their own ideas and interests.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- continue to develop the planning and organisation of meal times to ensure children receive a challenging and enjoyable experience
- update the complaints procedure to include current contact details of Ofsted, ensure the updated policy is shared with parents

- continue to develop partnership working with parents, carers and other childcare providers.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Most of the staff are well qualified and experienced in caring for young children within the early years. The owners of the nursery have a strong commitment to continuous professional development for staff. This ensures those working with the children enhance their knowledge and understanding of good childcare practice. All staff attend first aid and child protection training, which helps to keep children safe and well. Children benefit from a very effective key worker system. This supports children in their transition from home and enables them to quickly become settled and content. Comprehensive information is gathered from parents and carers on placement to ensure all children's individual needs can be met.

Robust recruitment procedures mean all adults in the setting are safe and suitable and a vigorous induction process ensures all staff, including those new or temporary, know about the policies and procedures. Daily risk assessments mean children play in a safe and healthy environment. Most records are appropriately maintained to support the effective running of the setting, although the complaints policy and procedure available for parents does not have information about the regulator, which potentially hinders parents' ability to express concerns about the care their children receive. Parental involvement in the setting is positively encouraged through the voluntary parents group, which organises social and educational events, as well as actively fund raising for various projects such as developing a sensory room.

Although the setting has yet to formalise their self-evaluation process the management team has worked through the local authority quality framework and invites frequent contributions from staff. Consequently the managers have a generally good understanding of areas of strength as well as those that need further development. Recommendations from the last inspection have been met due to an effective action plan. The nursery attracts local families from wide socio-economic, cultural and ethnic backgrounds and has sound systems in place to ensure that comprehensive information is collected from parents and carers so that children are recognised as unique individuals.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff support children's learning and development effectively and provide them with a good range of opportunities and experiences that help them make progress in all areas of learning. Information gained from observation and assessments is used to ensure that planned activities build on children's existing skills and knowledge and help them progress towards the next steps in their learning. Children benefit from sensitive support and encouragement as they move around the nursery and confidently choose what they want to play with. Staff support children well as they play and show them warmth and affection, which means children have confidence and high self-esteem.

Generally children have enjoyable experiences at the nursery. They are made welcome on arrival by staff who greet them warmly. The environment is warm and comfortable with examples of children's work, photographs and posters displayed that reflect children's cultural and ethnic origins. Periods of free-flow play through the day enable children to explore freely and express their ideas and preferences. They enjoy story time in small groups, or one-to-one with an adult and know how to handle books appropriately. Babies enjoy cuddles and games with staff that stimulate their language and communication skills, such as bouncing on a knee, or exploring a book that 'squeaks'.

Children in all areas of the nursery enjoy active outdoor play each day and go for walks in the local area; visiting the local play areas to use challenging play equipment or feeding the ducks by the river. Trips farther afield, such as a bus ride to a nearby country park help children explore the world around them. Materials, such as sand, water and dough are freely accessible on a daily basis and staff plan a good range of other experiences that enable children to explore texture, colour and consistency, such as 'gloop', pasta or rice. Older children use a computer and show they know how to access programmes and use a mouse; younger children explore technology with, for instance, electronic musical toys. Routines of the nursery day can be flexible, for instance, babies eat and sleep according to their own individual patterns but at mealtimes children sometimes spend periods of time waiting that are inappropriate for their age and stage of development.

Parents and carers receive ample useful information about their children's welfare and benefit from daily discussions with key workers. However, there is currently no formal system in place that encourages parents to share in and contribute to their children's learning. In addition the nursery has not yet considered how they might extend their partnerships with other settings in the locality, some of which share care.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Good
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Good
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Good

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Good
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Good
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Good
How well are children safeguarded?	Good

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Good
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Good
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Good
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Good
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Good
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Good
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Good

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection that required the provider to take action.

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.