

# Sunflower Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** 127658  
**Inspection date** 14/09/2009  
**Inspector** Lara Hickson

**Setting address** Milton Mount Hall, Old Road East, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 1NQ

**Telephone number** 01474 369349

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**Type of setting** Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## 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*.

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## **Description of the setting**

Sunflower Day Nursery opened in 1998, at the present site, but has been established for nearly 17 years. The nursery is privately owned. It operates from two rooms in Milton Mount Hall which is part of the United Reformed Church, in Gravesend. The children and staff have access to the two halls, entrance room, toilets, kitchen and a safe, enclosed outside area. The nursery serves the local area and children from the Medway towns.

There are currently 55 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 26 funded three and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions over the course of the week. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language.

It is open on Monday and Thursday from 09:00 to 15:45 and Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 09:00 until 16:00, term time only. The provision also offers care to children aged two years to five years during some of the summer holidays from 09:00 to 16:00.

Ten members of staff work with the children and all but one have an early years qualifications to level two or three. The manager holds a BA degree in Early Years and the deputy is qualified to level three. Three other members of staff are very near completing their NVQ level three training programmes.

The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are progressing well in all areas of their learning and development as a result of the setting's knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. A wide range of purposeful activities and resources are available to children and the staff team support and extend their play, for example through open ended questioning and discussions. Generally children are happy, confident and settled within the warm, welcoming setting. Staff demonstrate an excellent awareness of settling in procedures and outcomes for new children are very good as a result of staff's encouragement, reassurance and support. Partnership with parents is good and the setting works effectively with parents to meet children's individual needs. The provision uses self-evaluation effectively and has made many improvements since the last inspection.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- continue to extend opportunities for children to participate in child led art and craft activities
- ensure that changes to the observation and assessment system continue to include all areas of learning
- continue to extend planning systems to ensure opportunities in the outdoor area include all areas of learning

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

The nursery uses self-evaluation effectively to identify strengths and areas for development to help further improve the outcomes for children. Parent questionnaires have also been used to involve parents in the evaluation process, such as the parent/carer survey for new parents to gauge how effective settling in procedures are. The self-evaluation form clearly highlights how the setting meets children's needs, ensures their safety and enables them to develop to their full potential. The nursery is continuously looking at ways for developing the provision further and the staff team attend courses that increase their expertise and understanding in different areas relating to childcare. For example, all of the staff team have completed training on the Early Years Foundation Stage and First aid. The manager has given members of staff designated roles within the provision and they have completed the relevant training relating to their area of expertise. For example, the designated member of staff responsible for safeguarding has recently updated her safeguarding training. A staff appraisal system is in operation and training and developmental needs are identified through this. The setting has a very positive outlook regarding ongoing training and development and several members of staff are just finishing their NVQ Level 3 courses in childcare. The nursery is also accredited and has impromptu inspections from the accreditation team where their practice is observed and reviewed. The setting's capacity for improvement is reflected in the effective implementation of the recommendations from their last inspection.

Children are safeguarded extremely well in the provision. Staff deployment is excellent and ensures children's care, learning and safety needs are met. Children's safety and welfare are further promoted as all members of the staff team have undergone suitability checks and the manager is fully aware of the conditions of registration. The manager demonstrates a very good awareness of her responsibility regarding the safeguarding of children within the setting. A designated person is responsible for safeguarding issues within the provision and demonstrates an up-to-date understanding about current legislation. A written safeguarding children policy includes the procedure to follow in the event of a concern about a child in the setting as well as the procedure if there is an allegation made against a member of staff. The staff team demonstrate a very good understanding about how to help children feel and keep safe. For example, staff remind children to walk in the setting and discuss the implications of running on their safety. Children also learn to take controlled risks, for example when using the climbing apparatus and tools. Comprehensive risk assessments are in place and these are reviewed periodically to ensure risks and hazards are kept to a minimum. Risk assessments cover all aspects of the indoor and outdoor

environments. The nursery setting is safe and secure and systems are in place to ensure that children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. Excellent arrival and collection procedures further ensure children's safety, for example children will not be released to an unauthorised person. Fire evacuation procedures are displayed in the setting and these are practised regularly with the children to ensure that they are aware of the procedure to follow in the event of a fire or emergency situation. Effective recruitment procedures are in place, which ensure children are cared for by appropriately qualified and vetted staff.

Documentation within the setting is well maintained and available for inspection. All appropriate written procedures are in place and these include a lost or uncollected child policy, risk assessments and a record of visitors. Children's files contain all relevant information to ensure individual needs can be met and all parental consents are in place. The setting has established extremely positive partnerships with parents and ensures that they are very well informed about their child's progress through verbal communication when parents leave and collect their child and through the individual child developmental profiles. Parents are given a handbook to look through at the start of their child's placement and this includes policies and procedures as well as a photographic log of how the setting works with each child to help them develop and achieve at their highest level. This gives parents a valuable insight into what their child will be doing at each session. A parent noticeboard provides parents with additional information about the setting and pamphlets relating to the under fives. The nursery uses parent questionnaires to assess and review their practice and comments in these are very positive. Accidents and medication are recorded comprehensively and confidentiality is effectively maintained as each entry is recorded on a separate page.

The setting demonstrates a very good awareness of equality and diversity. Resources are accessible and available for all children to experience and include a wide range including positive images of diversity, disability and linguistic differences. The setting demonstrate a very positive attitude towards special needs and has systems in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) liaises closely with parents and outside professionals to enable children to progress to their full potential. The SENCO has attended appropriate training courses to enable her to meet the additional needs of children attending the setting. The setting uses the PECS system of a pictorial timeline as well as signs around the nursery to enable any children with speech or language difficulties or with English as an additional language to participate fully in the range of activities available. Where required the setting has translated documentation and information for parents in different languages to enable those parent/carers with English as an additional language to be fully informed about the provision.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Children are making good progress in all areas of their learning and development. Generally they are extremely happy and confident in the environment, even after

being away for summer holiday. The setting has developed a good observation and assessment format using short post-it notes under different areas of learning as well as written observations which are more comprehensive and detail the next steps of learning. However, the setting is currently developing these systems further and has introduced a new observation system 'My unique story' and will include photos and examples of children's artwork. Each child's key person will record this information every eight to 12 weeks and parents will be invited into the setting to discuss this progress record. This system will enable the setting and parents to work together to personalise children's individual learning and development needs. The staff team ensure through their weekly planning that activities are planned that cover all six areas of learning. The setting discusses children's starting points with parents and these are recorded on their initial entry form together with an initial observation on how the child settles into the provision.

Children enjoy the range of activities available and are able to have some degree of free flow between the inside and outside of the setting. Staff encourage the children to be active learners, using a wide range of activities and interacting and extending their development through additional discussions. For example, a child makes a model and explains 'it isn't a gun, it is a blower for the leaves'. A member of staff asks him he can see a shape from his model and shows him how it looks like a 'w'. She then takes him over to the alphabet frieze and shows him a 'w'. Resources are easily accessible, allowing children to independently select what they would like to play with. A group of four children enjoy sitting in the home corner looking at and discussing the books they have chosen from the book boxes and rack.

Children's behaviour within the setting is very good and they share and take turns well. Staff promote their confidence and self-esteem through praise and encouragement as well as through providing them with specific tasks during the week, such as preparing the snack or putting out the lunch boxes. These tasks help to develop children's self-value and foster a sense of belonging. Children play well together sharing resources and chatting whilst they play. One child shows another how to use the construction resources explaining 'no not like that, you fit it like this'. Resources available help children to develop skills for the future with help and encouragement from the staff. These include a range of electronic toys such as a computer which children use independently and number, letter and problem solving games and activities that stimulate curiosity and develop communication and language skills. Children experience the wider community through trips in the community as well as through regular visits from community workers such as police and fire officers, the dentist and road safety people. Although a range of different art and craft activities are available these are often adult directed rather than child led.

Staff provide excellent support for new children settling into the nursery. They provide appropriate support and encouragement and ensure that children's needs are valued. For example, when two new children are very distressed staff contact their parents and ask them to return to settle their child by being with them whilst they play. Staff explain to parents that by the parents sitting with their child playing with toys their child will begin to settle and participate in activities and routines secure in the knowledge that their parents are close by. Both children

relax and participate fully in the activities and routines of the session, supported by their parents and key person. Parents of new children praise the nursery, explaining how happy their children are and how they are settling easily. One says 'I feel that this is a strength of this setting'. The organisation of the nursery routine is flexible and enables children's individual care needs to be met.

Healthy eating is encouraged within the setting, snacks are nutritious and parents are advised of appropriate contents for their children's lunch boxes that will further promote healthy eating. The nursery children enjoy growing vegetables in the nursery garden and selling their produce onto their parent/carers. Children have daily access to physical activity either inside using bikes, slides and a trampoline or playing in the outside area where they play ring games, basketball and enjoy using physical play equipment whilst enjoying the benefits of the fresh air. However, currently planning for the outdoor area is limited and does not include all areas of learning consistently.



## Annex A: record of inspection judgements

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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