



Smarty Pants Nursery School LTD

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY290560
Inspection date	03 November 2005
Inspector	Margaret, Ann Sandfield
Setting Address	Smarty Pants Nursery School, 10 East Cliff Gardens, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 6AP
Telephone number	01303 259637
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Registered person	Smarty Pants Nursery School LTD
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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Smarty Pants Nursery School is a privately owned nursery. It opened in June 2004 and operates from 3 play rooms of a large terraced house in a residential area of Folkestone. A maximum of 38 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 08:30 to 17:30 for 48 weeks per year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 60 children on roll aged from 2 years to under 5 years on roll. Of

these 27 children receive funding for nursery education. Children mainly come from the local area. The nursery currently supports children with special needs and also children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 9 staff including the owner. Seven of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years childcare qualifications. Two staff are working towards qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health. Toys, resources and equipment are clean and well maintained. Children are cared for in a warm, well ventilated, clean environment with suitable routines, for example, they use anti bacterial cleaning fluid several times a day in the toilet area. There is a 'sick child' policy and medication records are complete and clearly documented. All of which helps supports children's well-being.

Children are beginning to learn how to stay healthy when they learn appropriate hygiene practices. They are provided with a mid morning snack of a fruit and a drink of water or milk. Older children are aware that drinking milk gives them healthy bones and teeth. Older children also know they can help themselves to drinks of water during the session, with younger children encouraged to ask for them. Any food allergies are listed and displayed in the kitchen to ensure children's dietary needs are being met. Food is stored, prepared and reheated appropriately, which maintains children's good health. However, the hot snack lunch does not always provide a nutritionally balanced option, for example, chips and bread and butter is on Fridays menu choice. Children's parents can choose to provide their children with a packed lunch.

Children have regular opportunities to play outside on or with a variety of toys and activities, including large play on apparatus. They have a covered section in this outside play area, which protects children from the elements. They also have opportunities for further energetic play indoors, for example, an energetic music and movement time and when performing action rhymes. This variety of opportunities helps them gain control of their bodies, develop physical skills and helps them to stay healthy.

Staff are booked on the Birth to three matters training. Nonetheless, they are currently using the framework to plan and provide care for younger children. As a result young children are developing healthy dependence and independence and are learning to gain control of their bodies with appropriate support. These young children are aware of when to ask for help and are acquiring physical skills in line with their stage of development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have independent access to a wide range of toys and play materials, which are well maintained and in good condition. The staff have a sound understanding of appropriate types of activities and levels of support required. This gives children confidence in what they can do and encouragement to try out new skills safely. They are starting to learn to value their own abilities, set their own limits and understand to ask for help when they need it. As a result children are gaining self assurance.

Children are kept safe from hazards as there are good procedures in place to ensure the premises are kept clean and well maintained. Children are kept safe as staff follow sound routines, for example, as an intercom system is on the front door, staff only open the door once they are reassured the caller is genuine. Parents/carers are let in individually into the hall and their children are brought to them from the playroom.

The staff have all the required documents in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. The manager and staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and know how to record and report any concern. Regular fire drills are recorded and all staff hold a paediatric first aid qualification. These procedures ensures children's safety throughout their time at the nursery.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle very well at the nursery as they and their families receive a warm welcome. Staff make a point of greeting new arrivals by name. Children move around confidently and make themselves very much at home, playing happily by themselves and cooperatively during group activities. They relate well to each other and to the staff and are developing close relationships with adults and their peers alike. There are many displays of children's individual or group art and craft work. All of which promotes children's feeling of self worth and makes them feel valued.

Children experience a rich range of interesting activities indoors and outdoors, which staff plan comprehensively to cover all areas of care and learning. This ensures the needs of all the children are met well. Children independently choose from the available range of resources and play materials, confidently asking for activities they are unable to reach. All children spend their time purposefully. They are helped to make informed choices through word and picture labelling of resource boxes and trays. This supports less able children, or children who have English as a second language.

Staff have a sound knowledge of meeting the needs of the under threes, although they have yet to access the training. Nonetheless they are currently providing care in accordance with the Birth to three matters framework. Young children are given a great deal of support and advice. This enables them to do as much as they can for themselves and be in control of their own learning and development, for example, they are encouraged to choose the action rhymes and to help them staff give them

hints through actions to remind them of the repertoire of songs they know. The children are also actively involved in story time when they were encouraged to tell part of the narrative that comes next.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. All practitioners are competent and have an excellent knowledge of the Foundation Stage and place equal emphasis on all areas. Children are eager, enthusiastic, confident and are flourishing in the highly stimulating environment. Staff work extremely effectively together and know the children well. They have a relaxed relationship with them and do everything they can to facilitate their learning. There are comprehensive systems in place, ensuring children's assessments are regular and frequently recorded to cover their progress in all areas of learning and development. The planning of activities are clearly linked to these assessments, which enables staff to facilitate children's progress. Staff display routines and activity plans for parent's information and parents are actively encourage to contribute their own ideas on any particular subject or topic of interest to them.

Children experience a wide variety of opportunities to celebrate varied festivals such as Diwali. Staff confidently build on this area of the curriculum through the additional support of a parent, whose knowledge is used to enhance the planning and delivery of the topic matter. Consequently children develop a balanced view of society. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is further re-enforced through interesting topic activities such as Autumn, the thread of which runs through all areas of the curriculum. They gather fallen leaves and place them in a wheelbarrow during outdoor play. They knowledgeably discuss why the leaves fall and where they fall from. Their autumn art and craft work form displays, which decorate the rooms.

Children's learning and physical development is encouraged through a wide variety of practical indoor activities such as action songs, which they perform eagerly and with a great deal of pride, confidence and joy. There is a children's growth chart with their names and height measurements displayed in the nursery, covering a period of time. Through this activity they learn about changes to their bodies through growth and about similarities and differences between themselves. They also learn what is needed to promote their growth, such as exercise, healthy food and drinks of milk. They are beginning to understand that these things help build strong bones and teeth. They are also involved in expertly planned comprehensive outdoor play sessions, whereby children are actively encouraged to play on or with a variety of outdoor toys and resources, which challenge them fully. Although a better equipped outdoor play house would maximise children's play experiences and stimulate their imaginations.

Staff expertly explore and build on children's knowledge of the Diwali celebration, explaining the history that underpins it. During the baking activity the staff patiently ask open ended questions to help children understand, plan and be part of this process and the changes, such as the change to the form of the ingredients and how and why this takes place. This activity provides opportunities for children not only to learn about cooking, but to be involved in weighing and measuring out ingredients and learning to share and take turns.

Children are constantly encouraged to develop their communication and language skills and build on their personal, social and emotional development during every aspect of their nursery day. Children are able to recognise expressions of emotions, when looking at a picture board of faces denoting different expressions. In a group activity they take turns to choose a face that best describes how they are feeling and are asked to tell other children why they think they are feeling like this. They have purposeful, long conversations with staff, who ask open ended questions throughout the session and in particular in small group time and in one to one activities. This is helped by the fact that staff know the children and their needs well. Children have several opportunities to use mark making activities both indoors and outdoors, for example, when they use chalks to make pictures or patterns on the outdoor paved surface. Children experience a great deal of attention to their developing written language and reading skills. There is frequent and regular encouragement to build their literacy skills through naming work or using name labels during routines, for instance at self registration time. They are actively encouraged to choose a book to look at on their own from a stimulating range. Staff enthusiastically read stories to them, sometimes using a large puppet prop to support the story telling. This makes it even more entertaining and exciting for the children.

Numerous activities relating to mathematical development are enjoyed by the children. They confidently participate in frequent number counting activities and answer questions such as 'What is one more' or 'What is one less'. Children access peg boards, developing their understanding of colour, pattern and sequence. There are opportunities to use examples of pattern and to sequence from templates or pictures to retain their interest and further challenge them.

Staff ensure individual children's developmental records are updated weekly, so that they are able to assess the next stage of development for the individual child. Staff use this information to influence the plans generally. These plans provide specific activities to support a particular child's current interest as well as planning for their future developmental needs. The toys and resources are provided according to the activities and resource plan, so they have opportunities to experience the full range over a period of time

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children relate exceptionally well to their peers and staff, with whom they have very warm relationships. As a result they form firm friendships with other children and trusting relationships with staff. There are clear and comprehensive policies and procedures for managing children's behaviour and encouraging children's good manners. Staff consistently follow these procedures and as a result, children are naturally friendly and treat each other with a great deal of kindness and respect. Children have excellent opportunities to make decisions and demonstrate individual preferences, whilst becoming aware of their own and others needs. They are also happy and extremely confident in the company of people less familiar to themselves, approaching them spontaneously. Children's care, needs and happiness are given a very high standard of consideration.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. It is informal, relaxed, friendly and informative. Liaison with parents prior to the children formally attending the pre-school, as part of their written settling in procedures, is particularly beneficial to children. The children's registration is completed along with other personal information, such as routines that they normally follow at home and activities they enjoy. This enables staff to plan and provide activities and resources, enabling children to settle quickly and appear very much 'at home'.

The nursery provides a comprehensive prospectus, which contains all relevant information. This helps parents to make an informed decision as to whether the nursery, would both suit their child's needs and be able to provide the service they require. The staff use a wide variety of ways to exchange information with parents, such as twice termly newsletters and displaying information on the parent's notice board. Children's attitude and play experiences are recorded on a daily basis in the children's contact books, which enables parent's to talk about their child's experiences.

Children's needs are met very well, including children with special needs and those children who are learning to speak English as an additional language. Staff are very pro-active in making sure procedures are in place prior to children with additional needs attending the group. This enables them to integrate well and flourish. They do this by using a variety of methods such as using Makaton, 'time line' cards and by learning a few basic words of children's home languages. There are also some basic self explanatory dual language picture posters. The group actively work in partnership with parents and outside agencies, to better understand and meet the needs of children with special needs effectively. All children benefit from a positive partnership with parents.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy a well balanced day in a very well organised environment. They experience a wide variety of adult lead activities and group indoor and outdoor activities with plenty of free choice options. Good adult to child ratios and experienced staff provide lots of support to encourage children to try new activities. Staff patiently and constantly re-enforce and build on children's new found knowledge and understanding throughout the session. As a result children are gaining a great deal of confidence to explore new concepts and appear very much in control of their own learning.

Staff regularly attend training to keep their knowledge base current. Induction training is provided and staff confirm that it sufficiently informs them and gives them all the information they need to perform their role confidently and effectively. The team work very well together, ensuring the smooth running of the nursery and the continuity of the care that the children receive.

There is transparent documentation regarding the operation of the nursery. Activities

are well planned and extremely well delivered. There is information on children, which is stored discreetly and completed in consultation with parents. Staff liaise with the parents regularly and children's needs are also discussed in the twice termly team meetings. As a result children's individual needs are being met effectively and they are making good progress. Staff are familiar with the written policies and procedures. They are reviewed and updated regularly to reflect the enhanced services they strive to provide. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and Management is outstanding. They have a very clear vision of how they want the setting to operate, in order to promote a high quality educational experience for all children. They invest highly in the committed staff team by involving them in all aspects of the service they provide. They are more than happy to delegate responsibility once the respective person is suitably trained and experienced and therefore staff are very motivated and feel valued. They encourage staff to plan and deliver an extremely varied and imaginative curriculum, which links in clearly with the early learning goals. Children progress educationally in a secure and happy environment, because they effectively ensure staff put the planning into practice. They are receptive to change and put processes and procedures in place to effect this change. As a result they provide children and their families with an enhanced level of service. Overall they are very committed to continue to develop the service that they provide for children and their parents in the community.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the group were asked to do the following:

Provide a higher lock on the staff toilet door preventing children accessing that area, which is now in place, keeping the children safe.

Provide contact books for all children, completed daily and sent home with the children, which staff now complete, informing parent's of their children's care learning and play experiences and enabling them to share in their child's day.

Provide twice termly parental newsletters, which parents now receive. They also contain information on festivals that they are due to celebrate, enabling all children and their families to feel valued.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 outstanding.

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):

- increase the nutritional value of hot snacks at lunch time to provide a balanced diet for children

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk