



Radnor Park Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 127478

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Inspector Margaret, Ann Sandfield

Setting Address 5-6 Westbourne Gardens, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2JA

Telephone number 01303 259226

E-mail

Registered person Damien Healey

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

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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?

Radnor Park Kindergarten opened in 1998 and moved to its present site in Folkestone, Kent in 2000. The kindergarten operates from 8 rooms over 3 floors of a large Victorian property. The office and staff room are located on the fourth floor. A maximum of 96 children may attend the nursery at any one time, of whom a maximum of 24 children may be under 2 years. The kindergarten opens 5 days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08.00 until 18.00.

There are currently 85 children on the roll, which includes 36 children in receipt of nursery education funding. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs.

There are 21 members of staff working with the children. Of these, 15 staff have early years qualifications. There are 4 staff currently working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children, toddlers and babies enjoy a range of activities, which contribute to their good health. Babies and toddlers are often taken for walks along the Leas, staffing ratios and weather permitting. Older children have opportunities to play outside in the enclosed hard surfaced play area, which gives children opportunities which help them gain control of their bodies. The setting now has a circular hard surface area for children to walk round or on which to use their ride on toys. However there needs to be considerable improvements made to the outside play area before it can be used by all toddlers and children on a regular basis. Some of the outdoor equipment is not very clean as the area gets very muddy in winter. Trees and tall buildings will provide children with shady areas to play, during part of the day, to protect them from the sun.

Children are cared for in a warm and fairly clean environment, that is well ventilated. Cleaning routines allow for areas of the provision to be sufficiently hygienic to prevent the spread of infections amongst children. Overall the rooms used are of a suitable condition, with bright cheery posters and examples of children's work and themes.

Staff demonstrated that they had clear procedures to follow in the event of a child falling ill or where there is an accident, which they understood and implemented effectively. Medication records are complete and clearly documented, which supports children's well-being.

Children and babies are beginning to learn about appropriate hygiene practices and follow good hand washing routines before snack and meal times, as well as remembering to wash their hands after using the toilet. Older children sing an action rhyme song about dental care and using healthy routines of brushing teeth and drinking milk. They are starting to learn for themselves, what they can do to develop strong bones and teeth. They learn how to stay healthy and about healthy eating habits through topics, fairly healthy meals, drinks and snacks. These are provided in accordance with their dietary needs and parents' wishes. Older children have fruit tasting sessions and know the names of the fruits well. Children are given drinks at snack and meal times and have opportunities to have drinks between times, although no children were observed accessing additional drinks of water.

Staff are starting to use the Birth to three matters framework in their planning and provision of care for babies, toddlers and young children. Babies and young children are cared for in a clean hygienic part of the nursery with routines that generally help

support their good health. However, routines in the baby room were not always followed, for example, staff hand washing routines, which does not always promote babies good health. Although table tops are thoroughly cleaned before children have their snacks, in the toddler room, the snack is put directly onto the table top. This is less than inviting and by using individual containers or paper plate or places, it would indicate 'their place' and would help them understand the rules of eating and prevent squabbles, for example, that food on another child's container or paper plate or place is not theirs and help prevent the spread of infections.

Staff follow good hygiene routines, when changing children's nappies, for example, wearing plastic aprons and rubber gloves and cleaning the changing mats after each use; all of which promotes babies and toddler good health. They are developing healthy dependence and independence and when they are able, young children are aware of when to ask for help. They are learning to gain control of their bodies with appropriate support and are acquiring physical skills in line with their stage of development. They have time both for physical activities and plenty of rest.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children, toddlers and babies have access independently to a suitable range of indoor toys and play materials across the age range, which are generally in a good condition. All children would benefit from an increase in the range of outdoor toys and resources, to provide for all ages and stages of children, once there is a safer and easily maintained ground area, especially for toddlers. The staff have a clear understanding about appropriate types of activities and levels of support required, which gives children confidence to try out new skills safely. Children ask for help when they need it and set their own limits.

Children and babies are kept safe from hazards as there are satisfactory procedures in place to ensure their safety during the session with clear procedures for visitors and the installation of Closed Circuit Television cameras and intercom systems. They are also kept safe on local walks or outings, for example, when babies and toddlers are taken for a walk on the Leas, mobile phones and children's information is taken with them. All the required precautions are in place and there are effective procedures to minimise hazards in the provision prior to the session starting as well as during activities, for example, routines or risk assessments and check lists. As a result children, toddler and babies are able to move around inside the setting safely. However, this is not the case with the outdoor area, as during the summer months the play surface becomes 'rock' hard and can be a hazard for children using climbing apparatus or generally when falling over. Many of the communal areas are in the process of redecoration to make them more welcoming. It is not possible to comment on all these areas, other than to say that children do not have access to these areas, whilst this work is in progress.

The manager has all the required procedures and documents in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. For instance the manager and staff have a good understanding of child protection issues and know how to record and

report any concerns and to whom. However, children would be better supported if the procedures were outlined in more positive terms, for staff to follow. There are sufficient paediatric first aid qualified staff. The manager keeps her own and her senior staff's knowledge base current, which promotes children's wellbeing.

Babies, toddlers and young children are gaining self assurance through close relationships. As a result they are becoming confident in what they can do, as they are able to value their own abilities within a safe supportive environment.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children, toddlers and babies settle well at the nursery. They move around confidently and make themselves at home. Children, toddlers and babies relate well to each other and to the staff and develop close relationships with adults and their peers. Children play happily by themselves, in small groups, or cooperatively at circle time. However, limited range of the outdoor resources and the actual area is less than inviting and restricts play opportunities. Overall they experience an appropriate range of interesting activities indoors. They independently choose from the range of resources and play materials available at their level, although some toys and resources are not accessible to them or labelled clearly, for example, with both word and picture labels so they can ask for toys and resources they particularly enjoy and begin to learn what is available to them. This would particularly benefit less able children, children with special needs or children who have English as an additional language.

Staff are beginning to gain a knowledge of meeting the needs of the under threes. They are beginning to plan and provide care in accordance with the Birth to three matters framework. They expect this to be fully operational by the new year, for example, with individual assessments and play plans completed for all young children and toddlers, whose needs will then be provided for on a personal basis in the daily planning. Babies', toddlers' and young children's needs are further supported through very good liaison between parents and the staff, for example, through termly newsletters outlining topics, as well as individual plans for toddlers, with copies given to parents. This enables parents to share in their children's learning and development at home, supporting them and building on what they know.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Practitioners have an adequate knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They operate a key worker system and as a result staff are able to get to know the children well and have a relaxed relationship with them. There are systems in place to ensure children's assessments are regular and covers their progress in all areas. The planning of activities is clearly linked to the assessments of children in order for staff to effectively enable their progress. They plan a weekly topic that runs like a thread throughout the days' activities, reinforcing their knowledge and understanding through a variety of play opportunities and activities. Staff provide routine plans for parents which are displayed and larger notices inform them of the current topic, enabling parents to share in their child's

learning and enjoyment.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is re-enforced through weekly topic activities such as 'jungle animals'. This theme forms the basis for many of the day's play. In the art activity children were shown pictures of wild animals and were encouraged to explore their main features and choose one to recreate in their own art work and during outdoor play, when they played 'follow my leader', whilst pretending to be different animals. Puzzles and books were specifically chosen to build on and reinforce this knowledge, by exploring on a practical level what they have learnt and understood. Children experience frequent opportunities to paint and their pictures often form parts of the topic work displays, for example pictures of painted hedgehogs.

Children experience opportunities to celebrate their own and others festivals such as Diwali and Christmas. Staff build on this area of the curriculum and consequently children have opportunities to develop a balanced view of society.

Children's physical development is encouraged through practical indoor activities such as action songs, which they perform confidently and with enjoyment. They also have regular use of the indoor ball pool room, where they have opportunities for both energetic play and role play in another area, for example a small group of children were pretending they were mummies and daddies. Children are encouraged to play on outdoor toys and resources, but play opportunities are limited by the poor ground surface, whereby it is often too muddy to make full use of this area in the winter and 'rock hard' and uneven in the warmer weather. This makes it difficult to include outdoor sessions in the planning for play, which would fully challenge children.

Children have access to construction resources, including building blocks, peg boards and threading activities, but they are not given templates or picture pattern examples to follow to extend building ideas or develop their understanding of colour, pattern and sequence, so many lose interest as they are not fully challenged. However, staff do provide support and help with their projects.

Children develop their communication and language skills as well as personal, social and emotional development, when they explore topics such as 'Me', which builds on their confidence and self esteem. They are encouraged to bring in family photographs, which also helps them to feel valued. They have an enjoyable, interactive story time, with the narrator holding their interest throughout. However, there is far less emphasis on building on their literacy skills using name labels during some practical routines, for example, snack or meal times. Therefore children do not experience sufficient attention to developing written language.

Children experience an exciting, imaginative and well planned music session with a peripatetic music teacher. They are totally involved in the session, avidly watching their teacher, fully focussing and concentrating on the activity, whilst listening intently to what is expected of them to successfully complete the task, for example, accurately re-creating the carol song with a great deal of enthusiasm and enjoyment. One child spontaneously saying 'I love father Christmas and I kissed him'. They are confident to speak in front of others and share their feelings.

Activities relating to mathematical development are limited and are learned in isolation, with few opportunities to re-enforce their learning on a practical basis, for example, when lining up or counting children in their group at lunch or snack time. Neither do they build on these skills by answering questions such as 'what is one more' or 'what is one less'. Likewise they fail to compare types, for example, numbers of boys or girls, or of talking of more or less.

Children experience frequent opportunities to paint and their pictures are sometimes displayed and support topic work, for example pictures of painted fried eggs for the 'Healthy eating' topic. They also have regular opportunities for imaginative play in the play kitchen. However, the only play house is outside and its use is often not planned nor is it equipped to stimulate imaginative activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Partnership with parents is good. The nursery provides a 'Prospectus & Information Pack', which contains relevant information, including some of the nursery policies and procedures, although the complaints procedures did not include any reference to Ofsted's contact details. Parents of children attending the baby unit complete a initial profile detailing their baby or toddlers routine, but do not include information on their stage of physical development for staff to build on. During the first few weeks they share much more information with the parents and ask them for their views.

The nursery provide a separate prospectus for children with special needs and children who have English as an additional language. These prospectuses contain an additional information sheet, for example, the one for children, who have English as an additional language includes sections for word in English and asking them for the 'word in your language', including the phonetic pronunciation, giving examples for everyday words such as mummy, toilet and drink.

The staff use a variety of ways to exchange information with parents, such as through notices, displays of information on the early learning goals, the Birth to three framework, newsletters on general matters, contact sheets and opportunities for discussion between parents and their child's key worker and room supervisor. In the main children's needs are being met as staff work together with parents to better understand children's needs, including children with special needs.

Most children and babies relate well to their peers and staff and are also confident in the company of people less familiar to them. They are friendly and are learning to treat each other with respect. Most children play harmoniously together and behave well. There are clear policies and procedures for managing children's behaviour and encouraging children's good manners. However, staff did not always follow them, such as lead by remembering to say please and thank you themselves or again when trying to encourage children to follow the rules of the activity by putting on aprons for water play, not all the staff led by example. Some older children had learnt to develop good manners and did so spontaneously.

Children and toddlers are discovering boundaries and limits and learning about rules.

They have opportunities to make decisions and demonstrate individual preferences, whilst becoming aware of theirs and others needs.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children and babies experience a fairly balanced day in an organised environment with times for both indoors, although currently there can be limited opportunities for outdoor play. They experience adult lead activities and group activities with some free choice of options. Qualified and experienced staff provide lots of support to encourage babies, toddlers and children to try new activities and as a result they are gaining confidence and independence. However, there are a few occasions when toddlers and babies would benefit from additional support. These are mainly the busy times, for example, at meal or feeding times.

There is clear documentation regarding the operation of the nursery. There are also a number of policies and procedures supporting the setting, with just a very few that would benefit from being up-dated. Information on the children ensures their individual needs are met. This information is stored discreetly to maintain confidentiality and completed in consultation with parents. As a result children's individual needs are being met effectively.

Induction training is provided and staff can confirm that it sufficiently informed them. Staff also confirm that references and criminal record checks had been taken up prior to working with children and therefore, children are suitably protected from people who have not been vetted. All staff know who to refer any concerns to within the nursery, whether it be of a child protection nature, concerns over children's development, behaviour issues or any other concerns. There are also nominated co-ordinators for special needs, behaviour management and child protection, thus ensuring children are kept healthy and their welfare is being maintained. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and Management is satisfactory. They have a clear vision of how they want the setting to run and are building on a staff team, who work well together. The nursery employs a qualified manager and has a system in place where one of the senior members of staff are appointed duty manager at each session to ensure the nursery runs smoothly and all policies and procedures are adhered to. She completes observations on staff and uses this information to inform future training needs, which is recorded in the 'Training Plan'. Overall they are committed to continue to develop the service that they provide for children and their parents.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection various requests were made of the nursery and information on these and the progress they have made is included below:-

#'ensure children have access to a suitable range of experiences and activities that allow them to explore, investigate and use their imaginations, both in and outside the kindergarten. Provide opportunities for children to use their initiative, to select freely and independently from a wide selection of purposeful and meaningful activities that are appropriate to their individual needs.'

The kindergarten have developed their range of toys, equipment and activities. They have developed part of the area with a suitable circular path, to use ride on toys or to walk or run around. They are planning to landscape the whole of this area, but currently do not have sufficient funds to complete the work. Training and development plan for 2006 includes staff training to plan and provide more effectively for this area of play.

#'plan and provide a suitable range of activities for children, which are appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs.'

Training highlighted in the training and development plan for 2005 has been undertaken and there is evidence that they are in the process of implementing this through their planning. Further training is scheduled for 2006 to better meet the needs of the range of children they provide for.

#'provide a suitable range of equipment to meet the developmental needs of all children within the kindergarten.'

As above. The kindergarten now meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

#'ensure children have equal and free access to a full range of equipment that promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.'

As above, the kindergarten now meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide

#'ensure the premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. Develop systems to ensure children have full and equal access to well-organised facilities that are maintained appropriately.'

Training highlighted in the Training and Development Plan for 2005 has been undertaken. They are in the process of implementing this with further training scheduled for 2006 to better meet all children's needs. Suitable procedures are in place and a Closed Circuit Television system has been fitted to ensure the safety of the children and security of the premises.

#'ensure changing and toilet facilities afford children their privacy and dignity and conform to environmental health standards.'

They have sectioned off areas with solid side screens, providing toddlers and babies with dignity and privacy, when they are being changed.

#'ensure effective safety procedures are developed and used to promote safety within the setting and on outings. '

Staff now take mobile phones with them when outside the nursery and all contact and medication information, to safeguard children's health. As evidenced above, on Closed Circuit Televisions systems have been fitted. They now provide a duty manager system and daily risk assessment sheets. This will keep children safe and their welfare maintained.

#'ensure children are provided with regular drinks and that food is healthy and nutritious and complies with their dietary and religious requirements.'

Menus include fresh vegetables and a healthy snack of choices of fruit. They also provide a weekly 'food of the world' dish. Children are given drinks at snack and meal times and have opportunities to have drinks between times, although no children were observed accessing additional drinks.

#'ensure all staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. Ensure that the child protection procedures comply with those of the local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC)'

They have undertaken recent training and appointed a child protection co-ordinator. Procedures have been up-dated, but need to be couched in positive terms. The duty manager regularly checks staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection and records outcomes. This ensures children's welfare is safeguarded.

#'ensure that all records relating to day care activities are readily accessible and available for inspection at all times.'

Records relevant to the efficient and effective running of the kindergarten, were promptly produced.

#'develop the leadership and management of the kindergarten. Introduce appropriate systems to monitor the quality of teaching to ensure all staff implement a consistent approach to children's learning.'

A daily duty manager ensures the leadership and management is consistent and that staff have access to further training. They are developing 'play plans' which are comprehensive and the effects of their implementation will be monitored and reviewed. The latter would in future provide the evidence to support whether their approach is consistent.

#'increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum Guidance of the Foundation Stage to improve the quality of teaching and children's learning.'

Staff have accessed and continued to access training to develop their knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum Guidance of the Foundation Stage. Planning documents and observations during the inspection demonstrates that the quality of teaching and children's learning is improving.

#'make effective use of assessment to inform the planning of activities to ensure all children, including those with special needs, and who speak English as an additional language, make consistent progress within all areas of learning.'

Individual initial profiles are completed by parents and ask for additional information for children who speak English as an additional language and with special needs, in order to provide a service that better meets their needs.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. 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 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 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):

- ensure all hygiene routines are understood and practiced within the baby room to prevent the spread of infections and keep babies healthy
- review the toddler snack time, to provide an inviting, hygienic and sociably acceptable routine, to promote good eating habits
- review the child protection procedures, to enable children to feel better supported, by encouraging staff to use more positive language when dealing with a concern
- ensure parents have all relevant contact details should they need to make a complaint

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):

- continue to develop the planning, to ensure individual children's needs continue to be met
- increase opportunities for children's mathematical development to be re-enforced on a practical level, by increasing their problem solving skills, for example, by exploring concepts of more or less than

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