



## Sparklers Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109086
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 November 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Nikki Whinton
<b>Setting Address</b>	Peatmoor Community Primary School, Pepperbox Hill, Peatmoor, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN5 5DP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01793 887473 ext preschool
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Sparklers Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sparklers Pre-School opened in 1990. It operates from a room within Peatmoor Community Primary School. A maximum of 21 children may attend the setting at any one time. The group is open 5 days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.15 until 11.45 and 12.15 to 14.45. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 43 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 31

children receive funding for nursery education. The group currently supports children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs five staff. Two of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children develop their understanding of healthy eating through topic work and the good range of nutritious snacks they enjoy whilst in the provision. Allergies and individual requirements are discussed with parents prior to a child commencing in the setting. They are then recorded and accommodated. Children freely help themselves to drinking water throughout the session and are able to eat food at snack time in sufficient quantity to meet their differing needs.

Children manage self-care skills extremely well and understand the importance of good hygiene routines. They know they must carefully dispose of tissues after use and wash their hands after using the toilet or before eating. They benefit from the staff acting as good role models. Staff have a good awareness of first aid and understand the correct administrative procedures to be followed if accidents occur.

Children experience a healthy lifestyle whilst in the pre-school. They have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise within the provision's secure, enclosed outside play area. Children move freely, confidently and safely, whilst demonstrating good spatial awareness. They take part in planned activities to develop their large muscle skills, such as peddling tricycles or throwing and catching beanbags, . Children gain good small muscle control and coordination by the safe handling of a wide range of tools and materials such as pencils, paintbrushes and the computer mouse.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play within premises that are very clean, well maintained, warm and welcoming to parents and children. They benefit from staff having a good understanding of safety issues and the importance of taking positive steps to prevent accidents. For example, hazardous substances are inaccessible to children, the premises are secure and exposed electric points are fitted with socket covers. Children's safety is a high priority. Staff ensure all required permissions from parents are in place, for example, for outings, to ensure children are protected. Children are beginning to help share responsibility for their own safety. They take part in emergency evacuation drills and tidy away resources to reduce trip hazards. Children move around the provision independently, safely and freely.

The children access a good range of clean, well maintained, age appropriate resources. Staff have a clear understanding of safety issues regarding the purchase and maintenance of equipment. As a result, children are able to self-select toys that are safe and suitable.

The staff are fully aware of their vital role in the protection of children. There are very effective procedures in place for making parents aware of the provider's responsibilities. However, the staff do not have a secure understanding of the correct procedures to be followed if there is a specific concern about a child. As a result, children's welfare is at risk.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are confident, enthusiastic and well motivated to explore the wide range of easily accessible resources and activities. They independently make choices on arrival. For example, a group of children decide to build with mobilo, whilst others choose to start shopping in the role-play area supermarket. They are well occupied, demonstrate good self-control and are able to concentrate for short periods, such as when listening to a whole group story or at register time. Children speak confidently in a familiar group, both spontaneously, such as when drawing pictures with friends or during planned news time. They have good social skills, realising the need to share resources and to take turns, such as when playing in the sand tray. Children have positive relationships with staff and peers. They benefit from staff knowing them well and having an awareness of their home circumstances. Children are very independent and successfully develop their self-care skills through practical activities, including putting on their coats for outside play or pouring their own drinks at snack time. They appear relaxed, at ease and demonstrate good self-esteem.

Activities are not planned separately for the youngest children in the setting, who have not started on the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, activities are adapted by the staff to enable all children to take part and achieve. They benefit from the care and attention they receive in the setting. Children are listened to and acknowledged as individuals, which helps to support their developing confidence and sense of belonging.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The playleader and her staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. They work well as a team, meeting together regularly to plan and provide a varied programme of practical activities to support children's learning. They act as positive role models and actively support children in developing their confidence, independence and self-esteem. Staff know the children well, have a good relationship with them and are aware of their differing stages of development. They ask them indirect questions to make them think, reinforce and extend their learning. The staff undertake written observations of the children, which they use to inform termly reports. However, they do not complete regular assessments of the children or use information from observation to plan for individual children's future learning. As a result, children's potential is not maximised.

Children have a good range of vocabulary which they use confidently when talking to adults and peers. Children enthusiastically use jolly phonics actions to reinforce their awareness of letter sounds. They are learning to recognise their name in print and enjoy practical opportunities to practice their early writing skills. Children listen attentively to stories, enthusiastically answering questions posed by staff. Children are learning to count with increasing confidence and are beginning to recognise numbers as labels. Through practical activities, such as exploring sand, building with construction materials or completing puzzles, children are gaining an awareness of shape, space and measure. However, children have very few opportunities to solve simple problems or increase their understanding of addition and subtraction.

Through meaningful activities, including walks around the local lake, collecting leaves and taking wax rubbings, children are learning more about their local environment. Children are successfully developing their understanding of time, confidently discussing past, present and future events in their lives. Their understanding is successfully reinforced by the staff. For example, an egg timer is used to help children realise when they have finished their turn at the computer and at each session they are asked if it is morning or afternoon. Children use their imagination well to initiate and develop their ideas. They are developing a repertoire of songs, enjoy exploring media and enthusiastically use information and communication technology as part of their play.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals. They access a varied range of easily accessible resources, such as books, small world figures and puzzles, which help them increase their awareness of diversity. The care provided for children who speak English as an additional language and for children with special educational needs is appropriate to support their development.

Children behave well. They benefit from the staff's good role modelling and their effective use of praise and encouragement to promote children's positive behaviour. Children are learning how to relate to each other, whilst developing their awareness of right and wrong.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are confident, show good self-esteem and demonstrate good self-care skills. They enjoy sharing their news and are learning to listen to others. They increase their awareness of other cultures through practical activities, including trying on kimonos, sampling rice biscuits and making mendhi patterns. Children take part in varied local outings, such as bus trips to the library and supermarket, to develop their awareness of the local community. In addition, children welcome meaningful visitors to the setting including the fire brigade, the police and a vet, to help them increase their understanding of the wider world.

The partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the warm welcome parents receive. They are provided with detailed information about the provision, although they are not given details about the Foundation Stage early learning goals.

There are informal daily opportunities to discuss any care issues and parents are kept updated with information through the well-displayed notice board and regular newsletters. Parents are actively encouraged to become involved in their child's learning. This includes activities such as the book-sharing scheme and bringing in articles from home, which are linked to a theme. They receive termly reports on their child's achievements and are invited to comment about progress at home. However, there is no opportunity for parents to share information with staff with regard to learning, in order to aid initial assessment.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's welfare and education is supported by staff who are appropriately qualified and experienced in caring for young children. There is an effective operational plan in place, which helps to ensure sessions run smoothly and the children benefit from stable routines. There is a very good partnership between the pre-school and on site primary school. For example, they share a playground and pre-school children take part in the school sports day. This supports children in their transition into the reception class. There are thorough systems for recording the attendance of children, staff and visitors, which has a positive impact on promoting children's safety. Legally required documentation is carefully maintained and securely stored. However, written parental permission is not always obtained prior to administering medicines to children. As a result, their health is at risk.

The leadership and management are good. The playleader and her deputy are well qualified. The new committee is enthusiastic and well motivated. There are regular opportunities for staff to meet together to plan the curriculum and discuss any childcare issues. The staff liaise daily with the management committee. They are working together to support the future progress of the pre-school. The group is aware of its strengths and areas for development, such as the assessment system and is putting strategies in place to support improvement within the care and education provided.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of the children for whom it provides

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

As a result of the last combined inspection, the group was given recommendations and key issues to help develop the quality of the care and education offered to the children.

The day care report recommended the group improve the statement of special educational needs with reference to current legislation and guidance, indicating how children with special needs will be included within the setting. In addition, the group was asked to ensure accidents are recorded confidentially and signed by parents and carers.

The setting now have an appropriate special educational needs statement in place.

Accidents are recorded confidentially and signed by parents or carers. These improvements have had a positive impact on the quality of care offered to the children.

The education report requested the group provide regular, planned opportunities for children to link sounds and letters and to decide where and when children will be given opportunities to develop their calculating skills. The group was asked to extend children's opportunities for independence, spontaneous creative play and improve the planned use of the outdoor area, in order to promote the development of children's large muscle skills.

Children are very independent and manage their self-care very proficiently. They have regularly planned opportunities to link sounds and letters and to initiate child centred creative activities. Children frequently take part in planned outdoor activities to help develop their large muscle skills. These improvements have had a positive impact on the quality of the educational programme offered to the children. However, children have few chances to solve simple mathematical problems or to develop their calculation skills.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been 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 good.

### **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):

- develop staff's awareness of child protection procedures
- ensure written parental permission is obtained prior to administering medication to 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):

- develop the system for assessment, to ensure regular, dated observations and assessments are completed on the children across all areas of development and aspects of learning. Use the information to plan activities to promote individual children's future learning
- improve the programme for mathematics, to ensure children have regular opportunities to solve simple problems and develop their understanding of addition and subtraction
- develop the partnership with parents, to ensure parents are provided with information about the early learning goals and are encouraged to share with staff what they know about their child, to aid initial assessment.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)