



Robin Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	151103
Inspection date	21 March 2006
Inspector	Gill Moore
Setting Address	Sway Youth Centre, Station Road, Sway, Lymington, Hampshire, SO41 6AB
Telephone number	01590 683440 or 01590 683243 MNGR
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Registered person	Robin Nursery School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, 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

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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 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?

Robin Nursery School is a committee run group and was re-established in 2001. It operates from a community building in the rural village of Sway, close to Lymington. A maximum of 26 children may attend the group at any one time. Children attend from the local and surrounding area. The nursery uses one main room, kitchen and toilet facilities and an enclosed outside play area.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday 09:15 - 11:45 during the school term. Children

may bring a packed lunch and stay until 12:30. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 29 children aged from 2 years 6 months to 5 years on roll. Of these, 16 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting welcomes children with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

The committee employs two qualified managers who are overall responsible for the day to day running of the group. In addition four staff work on a part-time basis with the children, two of whom have a recognised early years qualification. The nursery has made strong links with the local primary school. The nursery school is a registered charity.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well maintained because all practitioners have relevant first aid training and implement effective procedures when dealing with accidents and administering medication. Children extend their understanding of how to look after their bodies through discussions with practitioners and planned activities around themes, such as healthy living. They discuss a range of healthy practices with regards to sleeping, eating and hygiene and this is reinforced as they are encouraged to follow good hygiene procedures in nursery. For example, children talk about how germs spread and recognise the need to wash their hands thoroughly after outside play and as part of the daily routines before eating. However, arrangements for hand washing in the main room do not ensure the risk of cross infection is minimised because children share one bowl of water and use the same towel.

Children begin to gain an understanding of healthy eating as they are introduced to a range of healthy options at snack time, including a selection of different fruits. They make their own choice from milk and water and develop their self care skills as they are encouraged to pour this for themselves. Children often make their own snacks as part of a planned activity, for example, they make sandwiches, toast and pizza and choose their own toppings. They explore different food groups gaining an understanding about which types of food are important to keep them growing and well. Children's individual dietary and health needs are fully met as practitioners have a good awareness of these through discussion with parents and written information obtained on the registration form. They have opportunities to bring a packed lunch and stay for lunch club, which promotes social skills as children and practitioners sit together and develop good table manners.

Children enjoy many planned opportunities to engage in physical activities and thoroughly enjoy outside play as part of the daily routine. They confidently ride a range of two and three wheeled cycles and push buggies around showing good spatial awareness. Children enjoy jumping and throwing balls through hoops and develop their ball skills as they practise kicking and throwing and catching them to one another. They participate in obstacle courses, crawling through tunnels and

negotiating small equipment around obstacles and develop their skills in balancing using a range of beams and stepping stones, which they walk across unaided. Children observe the effects of activity and exercise on their bodies noticing what happens to their pulse when they have finished exercising. A well planned range of physical activities, inside and out, and daily fresh air helps children to gain a real understanding about the importance of exercising and looking after their bodies as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move freely and safely around the inside and outside learning environment because practitioners are vigilant and remove risks and hazards from children. Formal risk assessments are carried out with the manager and a member from the committee and in addition practitioners make daily informal risk assessments on all areas used by children. Plug sockets are made safe by placing covers on them, the main entrance to the nursery is kept locked and loose rugs and carpets are monitored to ensure they do not become a tripping hazard. Children learn how to keep themselves safe through discussions and activities linked to nursery topics. For example, they talk about the role of the fireman, enjoy a visit to the group and discuss how to keep themselves safe around fire. This is reinforced through discussions about keeping safe when using fireworks and children practise regular fire drills at nursery ensuring they know the procedure should an emergency situation arise.

Children are safeguarded from harm and well protected because practitioners have an in-depth knowledge of child protection issues and fully recognise their role with regards to protecting children in their care. Effective policies and procedures are in place, which are shared with parents, ensuring they are clear about the practitioner's responsibility with regards to ensuring children's welfare. Records of pre-existing injuries are maintained and effective systems are in place to ensure children's safety on arrival and collection to and from nursery. Detailed records are kept relating to the times practitioners and children are on the premises. Identification of visitors to and from the group is requested and procedures are in place to record details of the visit, which contributes to ensuring children are protected from harm whilst in the care of nursery staff, although these procedures are not always implemented.

Children use a very good range of suitable and safe equipment and play provision, which they can access independently across the later part of the session. Effective use is made of space and resources to enable children opportunities to engage in a wide range of activities and relax in a comfortable area. The environment is bright and attractive and welcoming to parents and children. Procedures to ensure all furniture and equipment are clean and well maintained are implemented, which contribute to ensuring children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children thrive in the wonderfully stimulating and exciting learning environment. They are happy and fully included in every aspect of the session gaining very good levels of independence and self-esteem. Younger children benefit from having planned time with their individual key worker but also from being fully integrated with the older children for much of the session. They delight in expressing imagination as they pretend to be hairdressers and place curlers and rollers in dolls' hair. Children are extremely skilful communicators talking through their actions and recalling their own experiences of visits to the hairdressers. They use a good range of vocabulary as they play in the supermarket and write lists of what they think they need to buy. Children play extremely well with their peers and are well supported by practitioners who use play situations to develop children's early understanding of number, for example, by using coins to pay for the shopping. Children are competent learners as they confidently use a range of construction equipment to build a car and solve problems together using a range of tools to attach the nuts and bolts. They enjoy completing puzzles and confidently handle a range of cutters and rolling pins when exploring dough showing very good concentration with their self chosen tasks.

Children's early development is extremely well supported by skilful practitioners who have an excellent knowledge of child development and recognise how young children learn most effectively. They are highly effective in the way they plan activities and group children to ensure the younger ones are fully occupied and interested. A designated key worker is overall responsible for planning and assessing children under three years and ensures an exciting programme is delivered. Clear learning outcomes are identified and individual targets set for each child ensuring activities are pitched at the right level and children make progress at their own pace. Practitioners recognise how daily routines and play opportunities link to the aspects and components of the Birth to three matters framework, and are beginning to develop their plans and written assessments of children's achievements in line with this approach. Younger children play and work alongside the older ones during outside play and free play and begin to develop their concentration and listening skills by joining in with large group times, such as stories, music and movement and snack time. Practitioners recognise that some younger children lose interest quicker than others and allow them to happily wander away from the group and involve themselves in something different. Consequently, younger children display very good independence, begin to make choices and develop a strong sense of assurance and belonging to the group.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children have a positive attitude to learning, are highly motivated and use good initiative when making decisions and choosing their own activities. They are extremely confident and independent, for example, as they dress themselves for outside play, pour their own drinks and help one another put on painting aprons. Children are extremely confident with the daily routine and arrive happily to the nursery school, identify their name and self register and join their key worker at their individual group table ready to start the day. Their speaking and listening skills are developing well as they listen to instructions and explanations from practitioners and confidently offer suggestions and contributions to group discussions. Children recognise the need to work together, for example, they comment on the need to 'work as a team' when painting a large snake for their jungle

display.

Children's concentration is very good because practitioners have an excellent knowledge of the individual children in their group and plan an exciting and stimulating range of activities and experiences linked to their individual interests and abilities. Secure and robust systems are in place to monitor children's progress and assess their achievements on a continual basis. This is implemented in a variety of ways and enables practitioners to identify next steps in their individual learning. The staff team plan the well balanced curriculum together at staff meetings, sharing information about each child, and then plan specific activities around their individual group of children. This ensures children are fully supported and receive sufficient challenge developing at their individual pace.

Children benefit from the structure of the session, which provides a good balance of adult and child initiated activities and enables them to learn to work together in large and small groups as well as independently. They express wonderful imagination as they act out their real and imagined ideas playing in the hospital. Children dress up to be the nurse and doctor, take telephone calls and write appointments and prescriptions for patients and learn how to use the different instruments. They talk about how the stethoscope enables them to listen to the baby's heartbeat and describe why they need to inject blood into the baby. Planned activities, as well as daily access to a range of media and materials, enable children to explore creativity and experience a varied range of textures. They enjoy mixing paints predicting what colour they will make, build models from recycled materials and describe the different textures using vocabulary such as shiny, sparkly and smooth when making collages. Practitioners encourage children to explore their senses playing games, such as sound lotto, identifying items in a feely bag and smelling and tasting different foods.

Children's early reading and writing skills are developing well as they practise emergent writing in a variety of situations and are encouraged to write their names on their paintings. Their understanding of sounds and letters is reinforced through an early introduction to 'Jolly phonics' as children bring in items from home linked to the letter of the week and learn the action that is associated with the sound this letter makes. Older children confidently write their names and identify sounds and letters in print around the room, in their names and in words they notice in books. Some are beginning to grasp the concept of rhyme and begin to make up poems with their key worker, linked to nursery topics.

Practitioners make extremely good use of planned activities, children's self chosen play and incidental opportunities to extend children's learning. For example, children count the number of children present at registration time, select the correct numeral to represent this and then work out how many children there are when another child arrives later in the session. Children are encouraged to solve their problems around size and shape, for example, when building the train track together and are well supported by practitioners who ask open ended questions encouraging them to think through their own problems and work out solutions. They show very good designing and building skills competently using a range of construction equipment and talk through how the nuts and bolts link together to make the propellers on the army helicopter. Children persevere with tasks and show good concentration trying to unscrew the nuts because they are too tight and are stopping the propellers from

spinning round. Planned activities and games reinforce children's understanding of number, shape and measure and they enjoy opportunities to observe how things grow. They notice and discuss how their environment changes through the seasons and talk about how ice is formed and observe how this melts developing their curiosity. However, opportunities for children to develop their investigative skills and curiosity and to use a range of information and communication technology through independent learning are not fully developed, as resources are not made freely available during their self chosen play.

Children competently use a range of tools, such as paintbrushes, cutters, rolling pins, and scissors and enjoy exploring media in a variety of ways. They paint using their hands, vegetables and straws, explore pulses and rice and mix sand with water to experience different textures. They participate enthusiastically in singing and dancing sessions and giggle with their peers as they dance around with practitioners involving themselves in the 'Sticky kids' session. Children's learning is enhanced and they make good individual progress because practitioners have a very secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and ensure this is delivered in a fun and exciting way. They are highly effective in the way they question children and use a variety of teaching techniques, which motivate children and boost their learning. As a result, all children play a dynamic role in their learning and become confident and independent learners during their time in the setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children flourish in the setting because they are exceptionally well supported by practitioners who enable them to become autonomous and competent learners. They are extremely self assured and develop a real sense of belonging to the group, which is greatly enhanced by the highly successful implementation of the key worker system. Children begin to show responsibility, for example, as they help pack away activities and resources, and take on roles, such as handing out snacks and collecting the cups. Practitioners know the children exceptionally well and help them to gain self assurance and develop high levels of confidence. Children's behaviour is exceptional. They are extremely confident with the daily routine and have an excellent understanding of what is expected of them. They confidently share and take turns and talk about why it is nice to play together fairly, for example, through discussions around the story of the 'Rainbow Fish.' Practitioners are highly effective in the way they promote positive behaviour through constant praise and reinforcement. As a result, children develop high levels of self-esteem, which impacts on the relationships they build with one another.

Children gain a well developed respect for others and develop an exceptionally good understanding of a range of cultures and beliefs. They talk about their families and home life, recognising and valuing the similarities and differences between themselves and others and are introduced to special events and cultural festivals through discussions, stories and practical activities. For example, children make Chinese New Year cards and learn how Chinese symbols differ to the letters we use. They make dragon masks and use these dressing up in costume to perform in the

dragon celebration dance and try new foods practising eating with chopsticks. Children have wonderful opportunities to learn about their local community and explore their immediate environment. Practitioners make good use of the local environment as a learning resource and children benefit from visitors within the community linked to topics, such as visits from the librarian, fireman and local midwife. They learn how to take care of their environment through visits from a worker within the New Forest District Council and increase their understanding of the importance of recycling in order to help their environment. Children represent their nursery as they participate in the village carnival and fetes, increasing their understanding of how they fit in to their local community. As a result, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

All children thrive because they are valued as individuals and their needs are fully met. Excellent systems are in place to ensure children with special needs are fully integrated and supported during their time in the nursery. Exceptional links between parents, practitioners, and other professionals and outside agencies involved in the care of the children ensure all support is well planned, monitored and assessed continually enabling all agencies to work together. Informal and formal meetings provide ongoing opportunities to assess children's progress, identify clear targets to be worked towards and ensure consistency between home, nursery and all settings attended. These robust and secure systems ensure children are fully integrated and reach their maximum potential during their time at Robin Nursery School. All children benefit from superb relationships between practitioners and parents ensuring their individual needs are extremely well met because high priority is placed on establishing and maintaining these relationships. Excellent links are in place between home and nursery, for example, through regular letters and daily discussions, and flexible settling in and induction arrangements help to ensure parents and children are well settled and feel secure with practitioners.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is outstanding. Children benefit enormously and their learning is enhanced because parents are encouraged to be actively involved. They receive detailed information about topics and activities, letter of the week and are encouraged to support their child's learning by bringing in items from home linked to topics and discussions. Parents receive detailed information about the curriculum and how this is delivered, through the parent prospectus, and are well informed about visits and visitors to and from the group. They are fully involved in the initial and ongoing assessment of their child and invited to share information about what their child can do on entry, relating to different aspects of their development. Parents are kept fully informed about their child's ongoing achievements and progress towards the early learning goals. This is discussed informally through daily discussion and through planned meetings with their child's individual key worker each term. This provides an opportunity for parents to discuss their child's ongoing progress with practitioners, identify their next steps for development and be informed of how they can support this in the home. Consequently, parents are able to fully contribute to their child's learning, which enhances the progress they make as young learners.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care and learning is significantly enhanced because the nursery school is exceptionally well organised and practitioners work extremely well as a team. Daily communication and regular staff meetings ensure all practitioners are clear about their roles and responsibilities, and as a result, the operational plan is fully implemented in practise. The deployment of staff is highly effective ensuring the younger children are exceptionally well supported, which is greatly enhanced by the effective implementation of a successful key worker system. Consequently, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Children benefit because all practitioners are suitably qualified and experienced and have an excellent knowledge of child development. Effective systems are in place to recruit, appoint and induct new staff, although these are yet to be fully developed to ensure their ongoing suitability and to show how new staff are supported and monitored. Excellent communication takes place between the committee and management of the nursery school through regular meetings and informal discussions, ensuring the management structure is effective and all are working towards the same vision. Practitioners have a secure knowledge and understanding of the nursery policies and procedures and most documentation is well maintained, which ensures positive outcomes for children are promoted.

Leadership and management are good and children's learning is enhanced because practitioners plan and evaluate together ensuring their individual needs are met. Effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate teaching and staff development, for example, annual staff appraisals provide opportunities to recognise individual strengths and training needs, which impacts on the opportunities provided to children. Secure and robust systems are in place to monitor the curriculum and the impact this has on children's individual progress towards the early learning goals, and clear procedures are in place to ensure sufficient challenge is provided enabling each child to achieve their full potential. Management have a clear recognition of strengths within the group and act on areas where suggestions are made for improvement. Practitioners are extremely committed and dedicated to ensuring the quality of care and education is continually improved for all children. As a result, children are extremely happy and settled in a warm and stimulating learning environment, where they develop secure trusting relationships and benefit from wonderful experiences in their early education.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the group was asked to develop the resources reflecting positive images of ethnicity, culture and disability and to ensure all documentation, policies and procedures are updated and accurately maintained. Resources have been increased and include a variety of books, small world equipment in the doll's house and the physical environment has been improved to include a variety of posters depicting people with varying disabilities and of different ethnic backgrounds, culture and gender. Use of these resources and discussions with practitioners enable children to have an increased awareness of diversity around them. All documentation, policies and procedures are updated on a regular basis, to ensure

they reflect actual practice of the group and parents are made aware of these changes through written information and discussions with practitioners and committee members.

At the last education inspection the group was asked to evaluate and improve the use of time and deployment of staff to make the most of all learning opportunities, particularly in relation to outside play and snack time. The use of time and deployment of staff are now highly effective and improvements have been made to the way in which outside play and snack time is now organised. More practitioners work directly with the children during these times and children have a much wider range of equipment and apparatus to choose from during outside play. Children's self care skills are enhanced as they are encouraged to pour their own drinks at snack time and be much more involved in this part of the session. This is well supported by practitioners who sit with children and talk to them about their day, making the most of opportunities to extend their learning.

The nursery was also asked to increase opportunities for children to independently access a range of media and materials and to express imagination through art and craft activities. This has been achieved through the introduction of a creative table during the second part of the session where children make their own choices about their play. A range of different media, materials and textures are available, which are rotated on a daily plan, ensuring all children benefit from opportunities to use the full range. Children enjoy this opportunity to explore creativity for themselves and express their own ideas, which enhances the progress they make in relation to the early learning goals in this area.

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):

- improve the arrangements for hand washing to ensure risk of infection is minimised
- further develop the procedures for the recruitment, vetting and induction of new staff to ensure their ongoing suitability and ensure records relating to visitors on the premises are accurately maintained

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):

- increase opportunities for children to use a range of information and communication technology and to develop their curiosity and investigative skills during their self chosen play

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