



Southlands Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	218488
Inspection date	17 January 2006
Inspector	Julie Mary Preston
Setting Address	15 Southlands Avenue, Newcastle, Staffordshire, ST5 8BZ
Telephone number	01782 626148
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Registered person	Southlands Nurseries 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Southlands Kindergarten opened in 1991. It operates from two rooms within a purpose built extension at the registered person's house. There is a fully enclosed outdoor area available. The kindergarten is situated in Wolstanton, close to local shops, schools and park. It serves the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 26 children from two to four years on roll. This includes 18 funded 3-year-olds and 8 funded 4-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The

setting supports a number of children with special needs.

The kindergarten opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08:00 hours until 17:45 hours.

60% of the staff working with the children are part-time, and 40% are full-time. All have Early Years qualifications to NVQ level 3. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and from the Early Years District Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO). The kindergarten has achieved an award for healthy eating, has achieved investors in people, quality counts and an accreditation with the National Day Nurseries Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment, where the procedures implemented by the staff help children learn the importance of staying healthy. Children are developing a good understanding of hygiene as they wash their hands after using the toilet, after messy activities and before having their snack. The staff understand the procedures for dealing with sickness, existing injuries, accidents and administration of medication. The time medication is administered is discussed, however, these details are not recorded in the log signed by the parents. This could lead to children receiving incorrect administration of medication.

Children understand the benefits of a healthy diet through discussion and activities undertaken with staff, this included achieving a healthy eating award in 2005. Children are given regular access to a variety of drinks and snacks that ensure they are not hungry or thirsty. For example, children are provided with free access to water at all times by having a water fountain and cups available. The staff work in partnership with parents to meet children's individual dietary needs, including those who have specific dietary requirements. If parents provide children's meals or snacks these are appropriately stored and served. This ensures individual dietary needs are met. The staff are aware of good hygiene practices with regards to food preparation and storage, the cook who prepares the food has attended a food hygiene course and implements this within her practice.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities that contribute to their good health. Indoor and outdoor activities help children develop physical skills and gain control of their bodies. For example, children regularly use the local swimming baths, daily use of the outdoor play areas and regular outings undertaken by the group into their surrounding environment. Children are given opportunities to rest in line with parental wishes and individual children's needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe environment where staff are diligent in ensuring possible risks are identified and minimised. Staff monitor access to the group at all times and record individual children's arrival and departure times. This means that children are able to move around safely, freely and independently making choices and decisions about their play. The staff develop children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe and maintain safety both inside and outside the setting well. For example, by having boundaries for behaviour in place that are reinforced by staff. The setting is well maintained and offers a warm and welcoming environment for children to play comfortably.

The child friendly environment allows children to independently select activities and resources from the wide range available, that are suitable for the age range of children attending. Toys are organised in storage boxes, in cupboards and on shelves with a selection available at child height to allow easy access.

The setting has the required safety procedures in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. For example, by providing a written risk assessment that is updated and providing written evacuation procedures. Although frequent visual checks on sleeping children are not undertaken as they are within hearing of staff, this means children are not effectively monitored. The staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures and a written statement is provided to ensure children are protected from harm or neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and show enjoyment of their time in the groups care. They are confident and make themselves at home. The children interact well with staff and with each other. This leads to positive relationships and a sense of belonging. Children gain confidence to express their needs and wants with staff. The staff take time to listen and make conversation with each child expanding on children's individual interests through discussion and questioning to develop understanding.

Children experience a wide range of age-appropriate activities that promote development, encourage confidence, develop independence and promote self-esteem, such as independently selecting activities and resources. All children spend their time purposefully. Many of the activities are child led with staff ably supporting and extending children's learning. The staff have a detailed knowledge of each child that attends and have an understanding of their individual capabilities. This enables them to adapt and extend activities to ensure each child gains the most out of each activity they participate in, including children who attend the setting with special needs.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the

Foundation Stage and how children learn and progress. Consequently children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Planning is good, it links to the stepping stones and extends children's learning in all areas. Staff maintain children's interest, sitting with children, asking questions and offering support when needed, but encouraging children's own independence. Staff support children with special needs well within the group. Children attending have had an initial assessment and ongoing assessment records are in place to establish individual strengths and weaknesses and monitor children's progress. Evaluations of activities are undertaken and observations of children completed. Staff help raise children's awareness of the community and the wider world, outings and a varied range of resources promote this. Behaviour is well managed and this results in a calm and caring environment for children.

Children exhibit a sense of belonging as they greet staff and each other as they arrive. Children are interested and engaged in their play as they select and carry out activities and assume responsibility for personal care. Children are friendly and show care and concern for others. They behave well, responding well to boundaries put in place by staff. Children develop language skills, with most children speaking clearly and confidently, sharing experiences and listening intently to stories. They are beginning to recognise their names, some children are able to identify letters within their name and are able to write their name independently. Regular opportunities for children to write for a variety of purposes are provided, however, examples of children's writing are not used within the environment to acknowledge and extend children's achievements in writing. Children are beginning to show an interest in books through story sessions and a book corner provided, they regularly use the book corner to take time to enjoy the wide range of books available.

Children have a developing understanding of numbers that are used in a variety of ways. They count up to ten and beyond confidently within routine daily activities such as the caterpillar activity provided, where children counted, ordered and stuck numbered circles together to form the caterpillars body. However, numbers are not used as labels within their environment which leads to missed opportunities. They develop problem solving skills, comparing numbers. Children develop an understanding of size and shape through planned and free choice activities provided such as the shape matching cards and the compare bears. Children develop an initial sense of time and place, and gain knowledge of their environment as they use the outdoor play areas, participate in outings and through discussions relating to specific topics such people who help us. They develop exploration and investigation skills as they participate in planned activities such playing with pasta, goop and undertaking cooking activities.

Good use of the indoor and outdoor areas helps children develop their physical skills as they use the climbing apparatus, the outdoor equipment and participate in movement sessions. They are beginning to use one handed tools with competency, for example using scissors for cutting out. Within the outdoor play area children are able to develop skills in pedalling bikes avoiding obstacles and have opportunities to further extend their play in many ways. For example, bubble blowing and using the walky talkies outside to extend the play experiences available. Children are able to express themselves through painting and enjoy exploring different textures. They are developing an understanding of colours, for example by participating in a colour

mixing activity. Children have lots of opportunities to develop imaginative skills through the use of the role play area, through dressing up, through the use of musical instruments and movement sessions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The staff demonstrate a good understanding of equal opportunities and special needs issues. All children are treated as individuals and their needs met. Resources and activities provide positive images and develop children's understanding of themselves and the wider world. For example, books, dressing up and activities relating to specific festivals. This helps children's awareness of the wider world, helps them develop positive attitudes and increases awareness of diversity and understanding of others.

Children are well behaved and show care and concern as they take turns and play alongside each other harmoniously. The staff apply a consistent approach to manage a wide range of children's behaviour. Positive use of praise and lots of encouragement helps to build children's self-esteem. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children make themselves at home, confidently deciding what to do. They have opportunities to rest and to be active.

Partnership with parents is good. The staff promote positive relationships with parents and work in partnership with them. Discussions are held with parents and children during the initial visits with ongoing discussions and observations on a daily basis to ensure individual children's needs are identified and met. The staff ensure parents are fully aware of their procedures and how children will be cared for, by sharing the groups portfolio with them, providing a policy and procedure file, providing a parents notice board, regular newsletters, open evenings, producing progress reports, completing assessments and having daily verbal exchanges about children's individual care and achievements. Involving parents in children's learning, for example by providing activity sheets relating to their current topic completed within the movement session for children to share with parents at home and by inviting parents to attend special occasions such as Christmas events.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. A well established and experienced staff team is in place. All staff meet relevant training requirements, by holding current early years qualifications. Detailed recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to ensure staff are appropriately qualified and vetted. The group undertake staff appraisal and monitoring systems to monitor staffs progress, assess their strengths and weaknesses and identify areas for future training. The manager and deputy ensure that required staffing levels are maintained.

The children feel comfortable and at ease within the setting. A well-organised environment is provided that enables children to be confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning. A wide range of written and verbal policies and procedures are used to promote the welfare, care and learning of children, such as a written behaviour and sick children policies in place. Policies and procedures are shared with parents to keep them informed about the service and their child's activities and well-being. This contributes to continuity in the children's care. Required documentation is in place. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection a recommendation was made that staff ensure records of medicine administered to children are signed by parents to acknowledge the entry. Appropriate procedures are now in place and medication records are signed by parents when they collect children to acknowledge awareness of the entry.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received one complaint relating to Standard 6: Safety, Standard 7: Health, Standard 13: Child Protection and Standard 14: Documentation. The complaint related to a significant incident that took place during an outing to the swimming baths, where a child sustained an injury to their leg. Ofsted asked the provider to investigate the concerns raised in March 2005. The Kindergarten provided a satisfactory reply to the concerns raised. The provider remains qualified for registration. The provider has made a record of the complaint in their complaint record.

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.

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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 regular checks are undertaken on sleeping children
- update the medication record to include details of the times that medication is administered 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):

- extend children's enjoyment and understanding of writing by displaying their own attempts of writing within their environment
- extend children's understanding of number by using numbers as labels within their environment

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