



## Sunny Days Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** 512758

**Inspection date** 22 June 2006

**Inspector** Frances Turner

**Setting Address** St Thomas Church Hall, St Thomas Church Gardens,  
Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD2 1SL

**Telephone number** 01484 543637 or 363247

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**Registered person** Sunny Days Playgroup

**Type of inspection** Integrated

**Type of 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 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?

Sunny Days Playgroup opened in 2001, and provides sessional care for the local community. It is situated in Bradley, on the outskirts of Huddersfield, in West Yorkshire. The setting is managed by a voluntary committee. Care takes place in a church hall building. Children have access to a large hall, suitable toilet facilities and secure outdoor play area. The playgroup helps to provide 'wrap around care' through working in close partnership with the nursery staff from Bradley Primary School. The

setting is open for five morning sessions each week during local school term times. Morning sessions are 09.00 to 11.30. The playgroup provides extended sessions for children who attend the nursery at Bradley Primary School. Extended sessions start at 11.30 and finish at 13.00.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 34 children on roll. Of these, eight children receive funding for early education. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties.

There are six members of staff who work with the funded children. All staff hold recognised qualifications in childcare and early years education, or are working towards these. They receive support from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, including visits from an advisory teacher. The playgroup is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because practitioners follow suitable health and hygiene guidelines. The premises and equipment are clean and well-maintained overall. Practitioners carry out frequent cleaning tasks to minimise the spread of germs. Procedures to launder cloth items, such as beanbags and dressing up clothes, are infrequent and as a result, some items available to children are dirty. Written policies and procedures help to prevent children from illness and are underpinned by individual health records, agreements with parents and staff trained in first aid.

Children throughout the daily routine explore healthy practices. At snack and meal times, they talk about food options and demonstrate some understanding of those that are healthy and those that are not. They recognise and link activities at home and the setting, for example, washing hands and brushing teeth, as positive contributions to their own health. Through child-focussed routines, children choose times to be active and to rest to meet their own needs. Physical activity and fresh air significantly contribute to children's well-being. They clearly enjoy the continual opportunities to be outdoors. Skills, such as riding trikes and scooters, throwing and catching balls and chasing games encourage positive attitudes to exercise.

The provision of snacks and agreements for packed lunches keep children well nourished. Daily varied portions of fresh fruits and sufficiently wholesome snacks help towards providing children with a balanced diet. Parents are aware of children's food intake and share information with staff to meet any dietary needs.

Many children identify their own health needs with regard to hygiene, rest and active play. They begin to demonstrate an understanding of contributing to their own health, as they know to put their coats and jumpers on when they are cold or playing outside and the importance of sun cream and hats when the weather is hot.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept safe from hazards in a secure, welcoming and safe indoor and outdoor environment. Displayed health and safety information informs staff and other users of the responsibilities for children's safety. Procedures for the safe arrival and departure of children ensure that children cannot leave the building unsupervised and are collected by named persons. Regular hazards checks and agreements for maintaining the building minimise risks to children. Though outings are not frequently undertaken, the setting has implemented a satisfactory procedure including agreements with parents.

Areas used by children have plenty of space and are well organised to encourage the safe selection of many suitable toys and equipment. Low shelving units, soft matting and effective screening alongside good organisation of resources is used to protect children when using large apparatus or engaging in activities, such as cutting with scissors and water play.

Children learn about their own safety through visitors to the setting, such as road safety. Practitioners provide practical activities following visits to help children to understand the information provided. Regular fire drills for all children help to ensure that children stay calm in emergencies. Using simple rules, children learn to avoid accidents. For example, they are gently reminded why bikes must not be used indoors.

Children are suitably protected from harm and neglect. Practitioners are trained and understand their role in child protection. The named person for child protection works alongside other agencies to implement the setting's suitable procedures. The manager takes positive steps to ensure she is up to date with any changes to local policy. Procedures to protect children are effective, however, do not extend to inform the regulator of allegations against staff members.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The provision of many well-organised and planned play opportunities enables children to fully explore the setting and build upon their natural curiosity as learners. Practitioners effectively promote a child-focussed environment that captures children's imagination and interest. Most children settle well and become confident to take part in self-chosen activities. Play provision, equipment and resources are age appropriate and for the most part provide sufficient challenge. Children enjoy selecting materials with which they cut, stick, paint and draw. They are excited as they jump on bubble wrap listening to the 'pop' as the plastic bursts. Cars and garages, dinosaurs and castles help to develop their imagination and sponge painting teaches them about texture and colour.

Consistent and trained practitioners, who understand children's individual needs, plan for development and progress. Written observations show what children know and

can do, though assessment systems are not age appropriate for children under three years old. Children receive appropriate adult support, they are listened to and valued.

Relationships between practitioners and children are sound. Children frequently seek adults to take part in activities or to talk. Behaviour is age appropriate and generally good. Adults help children to learn right from wrong through simple methods and discussion.

### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children enjoy their time at the setting and most settle well. The curriculum is relevant and balanced to promote each of the six areas of learning. Practitioners regularly plan activities to focus on specific stepping stones and assess children's learning. Written information, including photographs and observations, clearly demonstrate children's abilities and their experiences. Though a range of methods is used to provide short-term plans, the short-term activity plans are not used consistently or effectively as a teaching aid or to identify children's next steps.

Teaching helps children to belong and fosters self-confidence and self-esteem. They quickly become familiar with the flexible daily routine and learn to anticipate and take part in key times, such as tidying up and snacks. They have individual coat hooks to store personal possessions and most have accessible name cards to use during activities. Most children make positive relationships with others and some older children play cooperatively. Practitioners consistently and effectively manage children's behaviour to help them to consider their actions and the feelings of others.

Self-care is highly promoted within the setting. Children become independent and choose activities of personal interest from the wide range available. Teaching ensures that the overall environment is well planned for play and learning. The organisation of resources supports children's spontaneous play and encourages children to revisit activities to practise and develop skills.

Children frequently seek out others, particularly practitioners, to share experiences and talk about events. For example, activities, such as swimming with parents and siblings and tea at grandparents' houses, are excitedly talked about amongst peers. Imaginative play begins to involve others. Children use resources in the home corner to re-enact what they have seen. They serve each other pretend food and drinks, feed dolls and dress up in role. They extend their play to other areas, such as setting up 'dens' under the slide. Individual celebrations, such as birthdays, are highly valued. Children sing 'Happy Birthday' and listen to stories about significant events. Through planned practical activities they begin to learn about culture and faith.

Many children confidently communicate, more able children question and offer ideas and explanations as part of their play. They tell practitioners details of their drawings and offer ideas, such as to help boats float instead of sink. To do this, they use a wide range of materials in order to achieve. Talk is based around what is seen, what children are doing and experiences at home. Positive steps are taken to help children with learning difficulties to confidently communicate using their senses.

Through rhyming songs, children begin to learn to link letters and sounds. Some start to anticipate rhyming words in books, such as '10 Little Ladybirds'. Daily song times help children to know a range of traditional and other rhymes. They join in singing songs heard on cassette players and sing spontaneously during play.

Children begin to understand that print carries meaning as they pretend to write letters to friends. Older children begin to form recognisable letters with some able to write their own name. Effective teaching ensures that children are able to practise writing for a purpose. They use clipboards, paper and pencils when constructing, making marks for instructions and make lists during play in the home corner. Mark making is encouraged well. Continual activities encourage children to develop their hand-eye coordination and explore colour and texture. Children paint at easels, crayon on paper and chalk outdoors.

Though books are readily available throughout sessions, not many children choose to look at them. The planning and organisation of story time does not always benefit children. Whole group activity times, in particular story time, often do not take account of children's stage of development to promote children's abilities to sit and listen.

Children frequently practise counting skills. They count 'how many' in towers of bricks, threaded cotton reels and trains on a track. With adult help, they learn to deduct one number from another and count down from 10 to one. Many children count in rote to 10 with some able to count beyond. Older children begin to recognise numerals linked to their ages and can write some numerals correctly. With adult teaching, children use simple calculations adding one to a group of two or three or separating groups, such as dough balls, and counting to realise the total is still the same.

Teaching and learning takes account of using mathematical language in tasks. When measuring, children learn about bigger, taller and smaller. They weigh out ingredients when baking, measure themselves and log growth. They begin to use language, such as 'in the middle' to describe position. Through many practical planned and naturally occurring experiences, children explore shape and space. The use of continual resources, such as puzzles and jigsaws, helps children to problem solve and encourages the recognition of shapes.

Children actively find out about the world in which they live. They explore how things work through pressing buttons on cassette players, using a whisk to mix ingredients and testing magnets repeatedly to see how they attract and repel. The frequent use of computers, calculators, cash registers and other resources means that children confidently use simple technological equipment and explore what the information is used for in real life.

Teaching helps children to examine change. Making chapattis encourages children to observe how liquids turn into solids and learning about seasons and the environment helps them to see how the world changes. Children learn about time as they anticipate the next event in familiar routines and life experiences. Older children look forward to starting a new school and use photographs as prompts to talk about the past. They show an interest in their immediate and wider world, drawing maps of the

local community and learning about the habitats of different animals and insects.

Children develop physical control and coordination through a wide range of activities. They explore different ways of moving their bodies as they climb on apparatus, balance on equipment and move to music. The large indoor and outdoor environment enables them to move freely without restraint. This encourages an awareness of space as they manoeuvre themselves and equipment around obstacles and other children. Physical play forms part of the setting's continual provision and long term plans, however, practitioners do not provide specific short term plans for this area of learning.

A wide range of tools and play resources promote hand-eye coordination. Activities, such as threading cotton reels, using cutters in dough and cutting paper, help children to practise and develop fine motor skills. Balls and beanbags are used to improve their ability to throw, catch and kick. Overall, children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals given their capabilities and starting points.

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

The provision is good.

Children are highly considered as individuals and successfully encouraged to positively contribute throughout their time at the setting. They are confident, familiar with adults and settle well. Practitioners understand the range of individual needs of those attending and implement a successful key person system that enables specific care. They are skilled at identifying concerns regarding children's development and progress and are proactive in ensuring children with special educational needs receive appropriate support.

Positive behaviour management and role models help children to learn expected behaviour. All are aware of simple behaviour rules that are clearly displayed and consistently implemented. Parents and practitioners successfully work together to agree methods of managing any negative incidents. This encourages children to recognise behaviour boundaries both at home and at the playgroup and to take responsibility for their actions.

All children are included well within the setting. Basic policies underpin the practical experiences adults provide to encourage children's awareness of the wider world. Children access appropriate toys and resources. Through mini topics, such as 'Ourselves' and 'Festivals and Celebrations', children learn about other faiths and culture. The effective parent rota provides children with positive male and female role models. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff and parents work well together. Information pertinent to individual care is shared on a daily basis. Newsletters, policies and procedures and conversation keep both parties up to date with the setting and events. Parents praise the individual care, range of activities and experiences their children receive.

The partnership with parents of children for whom nursery education funding is

provided is satisfactory. Parents share what they know about their child through assessments carried out at home and through some contribution to their development records. They take an active part in the setting both on the committee and with rota parent duties. This enables them to stay up to date overall with the topics of learning and activities explored by children. There is limited information about the Foundation Stage and the planned curriculum to help parents know about and become involved in their child's learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of space, time and resources, including the deployment of adults, supports children's care and learning well. Practitioners spend all their time with children. They talk to children about what they are doing or have done, help them to achieve and share close interactions. Suitable employment procedures alongside regular training ensure children are protected and cared for by staff who understand child development. Although the registered person is in breach of a regulation by not informing Ofsted about an allegation of abuse against a staff member, the child protection and complaints procedures mean that children's safety and well-being is maintained.

Required policies and procedures form part of the suitable operational plan and work overall. There are however, some discrepancies between the information provided for parents and those used by practitioners at the setting. Policies and procedures are not regularly reviewed to ensure they are up to date and that consistent information is shared. Specific times for planning children's activities ensure all practitioners satisfactorily contribute, share in and learn from the planning procedures. Frequent staff meetings and supervision update inform staff of changes and plans.

## **Leadership and Management**

The leadership and management is satisfactory. Practitioners plan and provide a relevant curriculum for children within a stimulating and child-focussed environment. The setting is aware of the gaps in the provision for nursery education and has an action plan to sufficiently detail how these will be addressed. Regular staff meetings enable practitioners to openly and honestly assess the curriculum and resources. Action plans for monitoring and evaluating the provision are developing in response to the previous inspection. At present, practitioners do not sufficiently evaluate activities undertaken by children, including those with learning difficulties, to significantly enhance monitoring systems.

All staff demonstrate a clear commitment to improvement through accessing relevant training courses, taking advice from external agencies and working with a local school to establish good links for children's learning. High expectations are held for children as individuals. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.



## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous inspection, the setting was provided with a number of actions in relation to the National Standards and key issues for Nursery Education. In response, the provider has reviewed all written information about the setting and implemented new policies and procedures that contain details to meet most requirements. This significantly enhances the care and well-being of children.

The setting has developed strategies to promote children's good behaviour. Upon starting at the playgroup, children are introduced to simple positive behaviour prompts that are displayed around the play area. They are encouraged to smile, have fun and be kind to others. Practitioners share their understanding of expected behaviours and are consistent in their approach to negative incidents. Good partnerships with parents help children to understand behaviour boundaries at home and in the setting and staff enable parents to link with external agencies as a support for promoting positive behaviour.

The setting completes regular assessments of its strengths and weaknesses alongside local authority teacher support. Systems enable practitioners to review planning procedures to enhance the playgroup provision, teaching and learning. Staff can identify areas for improvement and areas of strength and have documented areas to be further explored and improved. The use of new records for curriculum planning help staff to ensure a relevant and balanced curriculum, but are not used to evaluate activities or differentiate between older and younger children. As a result, playgroup practice has changed and whole group activities do not sufficiently hold the attention or interest of older or younger children.

A review of the curriculum and written plans have improved the opportunities for children to attempt to write for a variety of purposes, count reliably up to 10 objects, understand simple addition through combining two groups and work on challenging balancing equipment. Children use number and count frequently during everyday occurring activities. For example, they count bricks, count during stories, count children and count balls of dough. Many children can count to 10 and some beyond. Through adult initiated activities, they are beginning to calculate, adding one thing to another and grouping objects. Many opportunities exist for children to write for a purpose and children enjoy doing so. They write letters, lists and instructions during play. Balancing equipment is increasing using lending schemes and a collection of items, such as milk crates, that can be organised for challenging activities.

The setting takes positive steps to encourage parents to share what they know about their child. Using baseline assessments, parents contribute written information about their child's abilities upon entry to the group. All parents are invited to contribute to children's records of achievement to show experiences and progress at home. This, in addition to the daily verbal exchange of information about children, satisfactorily enhances the partnership with parents.

## **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):

- review the use of assessment for children under three years to ensure it is age appropriate and relevant
- improve systems for reviewing and updating policies and procedures to ensure all information is up to date
- ensure Ofsted is notified of any significant changes or events including allegations made against a staff member or volunteer

### **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 daily plans to consistently inform all practitioners of children's intended learning including special educational needs, to identify their next steps for learning and enable more detailed plans for outdoor play and the use of books
- continue to develop the information parents receive regarding the nursery education provision to encourage them to become involved in their child's learning.

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