



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 131560

DfES Number: 584633

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	11/05/2004
Inspector Name	Alison Jane Kaplonek

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Sessional Day Care
Setting Name	Sparklers Playgroup
Setting Address	St. Denys Church Centre, Dundee Road Southampton Hampshire SO17 2ND

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	St. Deny's Community Help Projects 1064731
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	St. Deny's Community Help Projects
Address	St. Denys Church Centre Dundee Road Southampton Hampshire SO17 2ND

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Sparklers Pre-school is owned and managed by the St Deny's Community Help Projects, a registered charity, which is based at St Deny's Church Centre in Southampton. It was first established in 1997. The pre-school serves the local community and offers sessional care for children aged 2 to 5 years. Currently 32 children attend the pre-school throughout the week. This includes 18 funded 3 year olds and 7 funded 4 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group is able to support children who have special needs and for whom English is an additional language.

Sparklers pre-school is open for 5 morning sessions weekly from Monday to Friday between 09:00 and 11:30 and Thursday between 12:30 and 15:00 during term time. There are 2 full-time staff and 4 part-time. All staff have early years qualifications. Many of them have first aid training. The pre-school receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

How good is the Day Care?

Sparklers pre-school provides good quality care for children.

Staff provide a warm and welcoming environment. They know the children well and are able to meet their needs appropriately. They use the space available well whilst ensuring that the premises are kept safe and secure. The pre-school has a good range of toys and equipment and children are able to select activities independently. Staff keep good records relating to the care and learning of the children although some documentation lacks detail.

The pre-school has procedures in place for the safe evacuation of children in the event of an emergency and practices regular fire drills with the children and staff. However, written procedures relevant to the pre-school are not in place. Records are maintained of all accidents and any medication given to children and a full risk assessment of the premises is carried out each year. Staff provide a healthy range of snacks and are aware of any dietary needs that children may have.

Staff provide a wide range of resources and activities for all children. Children are grouped appropriately for many activities to enable them to learn according to their stage of development. Staff know and value the children and are sensitive to any special needs they may have. They praise and encourage good behaviour and children behave well.

Parents are kept well informed about the policies and procedures of the pre-school and are able to approach the staff if there are any concerns regarding the care of their children.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- Staff have good relationships with the children, know them well and are interested in what they say and do. They group children appropriately for some focused activities, according to their age and stage of development. Children have access to a wide range of resources and activities.
- The pre-school maintains a good ratio of adults to children. They use the space available well to meet the needs of the children and ensure that the premises are kept safe and secure during the session.
- Children are provided with a good variety of nutritious snacks and have independent access to drinking water at all times. Staff keep records of those children who have allergies and specific dietary needs.
- Staff have a sound knowledge of the individual needs of the children and include and value all children. They are sensitive to the needs of all children, including those who may have special needs and have completed appropriate training to enable them to provide the required support.
- Children behave well. Staff act as good role models, set clear boundaries and value and encourage good behaviour. They keep records of any issues which they feel may need to be monitored.
- The pre-school keeps appropriate records for each child, which are shared with parents, ensuring that children's welfare, care and learning are of a good standard. There is a comprehensive range of policies and procedures in place, which are also shared with parents.

What needs to be improved?

- the written fire procedure to show clearly the evacuation process for staff and children at the pre-school
- the recording of accidents and medication, to show when medication has been administered and keep absent parents informed of head injuries
- the record of behaviour management and child protection incidents to show

the next steps taken.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
6	make sure that the fire procedure is appropriate for the evacuation of the pre-school and that it is displayed on the wall for staff and visitors to see.
7	obtain written permission from parents before administering medication to children and keep records of occasionally used medications to ensure that it is clear whether they have been administered or not.
7	extend the written record, signed by carers, of accidents involving head injuries to ensure that parents of children collected by childminders have been fully informed.
11	keep a sufficiently detailed record of the next steps followed when an issue has been identified and share this with parents if appropriate.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Sparklers pre-school is a warm and welcoming pre-school. Provision is acceptable and of good quality. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Their progress in personal, social and emotional development and in knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. They behave well and enjoy their learning. Most children concentrate well and are able to select resources and activities independently using a wide range of tools and materials with confidence. Progress in all other areas of learning is generally good.

The quality of teaching is generally good. Children are grouped according to their age and appropriate stage of development for many focused activities and staff provide good support. Children are offered a good range of interesting activities, ensuring that they are keen to learn. Staff make regular assessments of children's learning and these are shared with parents. However, the planning system does not include clear learning outcomes for some areas of learning. The programme for communication, language and literacy lacks opportunities for younger children to enjoy rhymes and books or practice their writing skills during their play.

Leadership and management is generally good. The staff and management committee are committed to providing care and education of a good standard for all children. Staff are given good support and encouragement by the management committee. However, the effectiveness of the Foundation Stage and the implementation of key issues needs to be monitored to ensure that children reach their full potential.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents are provided with information about the organisation of the setting and their children's progress. They find staff approachable and feel able to share information about their children. Parents are encouraged to be involved with their children's care and education.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. Most are confident and relate well to adults and each other. They know the daily routines and behave well. Most children concentrate well and are able to select activities and resources independently.
- Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is very good. They are curious and enjoy finding out about living things and the changes that occur. They enjoy using a wide range of tools and materials to design and build and do this with confidence. They talk about their families and things that have happened to them and are beginning to learn about the cultures and beliefs of other people.

- Most older children are confident speakers and converse easily with adults and other children. They are beginning to use language to organise their play.
- A good range of resources and planned activities enable children to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals.
- Staff work well as a team, providing support for all children. They and the management committee are dedicated to improving care and education for all children.

What needs to be improved?

- the programme for communication, language and literacy, to ensure that all children are beginning to recognise the sounds of letters and words and are beginning to enjoy rhymes and stories in groups and independently
- the use of everyday routines and play activities to help children write letters and numbers for different purposes
- the opportunities for children to use their knowledge of numbers to calculate and solve simple number problems
- the planning system, particularly for physical development, music and dance, to ensure that there are clear learning outcomes for these areas of learning.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made since the last inspection. There were four key issues identified at the last inspection. These were to improve assessment records, increase the opportunities for children to learn the sounds of letters, use mathematical language and explore sounds and music.

The assessment records are now being kept on the record of achievement booklets provided by the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. These are shared with the parents.

A letter of the week has been introduced in the pre-school since the last inspection but this appears not to have been linked closely to the patterns and rhymes of letters and words and is a key issue from this inspection.

Mathematical language is now used by staff during practical activities such as parachute games and obstacle courses. However, it does not include the language needed for adding and subtraction and children are not provided with opportunities to record numbers during their play.

The exploration of sound in music and the use of imagination through music and dance is sometimes happening within the group but is not planned or linked to the foundation stage curriculum.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Most children are confident and have high levels of self-esteem and independence. They relate well to adults and each other. Children behave well. They learn to share, take turns and tidy -up. They know and are confident with the routines of the session. Most children concentrate well and are keen to learn. Children are able to select activities and resources independently and are beginning to learn about the cultures and beliefs of others.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Most children are confident speakers and converse easily with adults and each other. Most children enjoy stories in large groups and are beginning to learn the shapes of letters and words. They are beginning to use language to organise their play. However, younger children concentrate less well during large group story times and there are missed opportunities for younger children to enjoy rhymes, hear the sounds of letters and enjoy books. They do not practice their writing skills during their play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Some older children count confidently beyond 10. Some children recognise numbers during table top games. They are learning about pattern, shape and size through practical activities and when using simple programmes on the computer. They are beginning to use positional language during activities. Some children do not sufficiently use their knowledge of numbers to calculate or solve simple number problems and have few opportunities to start to record numbers during their play.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children are curious. They enjoy finding out about living things and objects in their environment. They confidently use a range of tools and materials to design and build. Children talk about their environment, families and events in their lives and are beginning to learn about the cultures and beliefs of others.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move confidently and with increasing co-ordination and control. They use a wide range of equipment, tools and materials safely. Children show an awareness of others while moving around the environment. Children show an understanding of the need for good hygiene routines. However, learning outcomes for physical development are unclear and some opportunities are missed for children to pedal, skip, run because of the lack of an outside area.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT	
Judgement:	Generally Good
<p>Children use their senses to explore colour, texture, shape and form through a variety of practical activities. They use their imaginations during art, role-play and when junk modelling and respond with enjoyment and excitement during activities. Plans do not show clear learning outcomes for music or dance activities, particularly the link between listening to music and rhymes and the pattern of sounds.</p>	
<p>Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.</p>	

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- develop the programme for communication, language and literacy, to ensure that all children are beginning to recognise the sounds of letters and words and also beginning to enjoy rhymes and stories , both in groups and independently
- ensure that everyday routines and play activities are used to encourage children to write letters and numbers for different purposes and use their knowledge of numbers to calculate and solve simple number problems
- develop the planning system to ensure that clear learning outcomes for physical development, music and dance are included.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.