

Southgate Pre School

Hardwick Childrens Centre, Steward Road, BURY ST. EDMUNDS, Suffolk, IP33 2PW

Inspection date	18/12/2012
Previous inspection date	14/06/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- Children show a strong sense of belonging; they enjoy their time at the setting and make meaningful attachments and friendships. Children are well prepared for transitions, both into the setting and onto the next stage in their education.
- Children enjoy the very well resourced, stimulating and fun environment to which they have free access, indoors and outside.
- Children learn to care for living things as they observe, feed and pet the setting's resident guinea pigs.

It is not yet good because

- Effective performance management is lacking and results in inconsistent quality of teaching. Some staff are less confident in planning and delivering suitably challenging experiences for their key children.
- Parents are not always involved in sharing what they know about their child to aid the planning of activities at the setting, and to enhance learning at home, therefore opportunities for children to make progress are missed.
- Information regarding who has parental responsibility for children is not sought at the time of admission, which may impact negatively on children's welfare.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector spent time talking to the manager, staff and provider, and interacting with children.
- The inspector observed activities and routines in the main playroom and the outside area.
- The inspector looked at documents including checks on staff suitability, policies and procedures, risk assessments and children's developmental records.
- The inspector took account of parents' written comments submitted in advance of the inspection.

Inspector

Sarah Williams

Full Report

Information about the setting

Southgate Pre-school was registered in 1971 and re-registered when it moved to the current premises in 2010. It is managed by a voluntary committee. It operates from a playroom within Hardwick Children's Centre in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. Children have access to an enclosed outside area. The setting opens each weekday from 8.45am to 11.45am and 12.30pm to 3.30pm. An optional lunch club is offered from 11.45am to 12.30pm. Sessions run during school term time only.

The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. There are currently 63 children aged from two to five years on roll. The setting supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who have English as an additional language. The setting provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

The setting employs eight members of staff and three regular volunteers. All staff hold relevant early years qualifications.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- improve the two way flow of information between parents and the setting to ensure all information required to support children's welfare is in place: this refers to seeking information with regard to who has parental responsibility for the child
- improve the performance management and monitoring systems to ensure that the quality of teaching and the implementation of the new observation and assessment system is monitored for consistency and information gained is used to shape individual practitioners' professional development

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- involve all parents in their children's learning by improving the exchange of information and encouraging them to share their views and enhance children's learning and development at home.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children make satisfactory, sometimes good, progress towards the early learning goals. They enjoy activities and experiences, covering all areas of learning, in an exciting and child-friendly environment, which is very well-resourced and set out. Some staff are less confident in how to assess what children need to do as the next stage in their learning and do not share this information with parents regularly. Lack of consistency in the quality of observation and assessment means that some children do not have activities planned which challenge them and maximise their potential.

Most staff know how children learn and respond well to children's ideas and interests. For

example, a child showed interest in clocks and telling the time, so activities were planned to explore these themes and help children understand how a clock face is laid out and what the hands mean. This was done through play and children's completed clocks placed on display so they can revisit the activity. Children enjoy free-flow play between the indoor and outdoor areas. The outdoor play and learning facilities are a strength at the setting, with very high quality, stimulating and appealing resources, which engage children's interests and encourage them to explore and play imaginatively. Staff support children to build with the large foam blocks and use them for balancing on. A 'wishing well' was created after a child recalled one he had seen, and children spoke about their wishes as they threw in a pebble. A corner is set up as 'Santa's Workshop' where children can role play Christmas themed stories and ideas. Nature and the changing seasons are observed both in the large, protected pond and its wildlife, and in the trees and flower beds.

The main playroom offers children a selection of activities and equipment to support their mathematical development, and creative and imaginative play. They become involved in seasonal crafts such as making Christmas decorations and calendars. Small world play, with fantasy figures and props, encourages vocabulary as children talk about what they are doing. Children enthusiastically use a camera to take photographs of their models, and competently negotiate simple programs on the computer with little adult support.

Children with special educational needs and/ or disabilities, or who have English as a second language are very well catered for. The setting's special educational needs coordinator is knowledgeable and works closely with parents to support children by working alongside other professionals. Children who have individual education plans are monitored and their progress is reviewed regularly. Children make good progress in communication, and personal and emotional development as they join in and follow routines, sometimes helped by sign language. All children enjoy using this during singing and story times.

The key person system generally supports the partnership with parents, however, not all staff are confident in engaging with parents to report on children's progress and their next steps in learning, so some opportunities for continuing learning at home are missed.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children form close, meaningful attachments and demonstrate a strong sense of belonging at the setting. The key person system enables the staff to get to know the individual children very well and understand their different characters and learning styles. For example, staff know which children relish outdoor play and like being very physically active. Equally, children who need additional help following routines are handled with patience and given calm, clear instructions, including visual timetables and sign language, that they can more easily understand.

The staff work well as a team and are deployed within the setting to ensure children's safety and allow them to access all areas with support. Recently, the systems for children entering and leaving the setting have been reviewed to ensure safety at what can be a

busy time.

Children's health and welfare is supported as they enjoy snacks and meals in accordance with their dietary needs and preferences. Hot meals are available from the adjacent school kitchen as an alternative to the packed lunches that they also enjoy. Children know where to access their drinks at any time throughout the day and have milk and water offered at snack time. They enjoy fresh air and exercise as they can play out of doors for much of the session. The garden is inspiring and invites children to weave their way around the interesting paths and under the mature trees, which form a dramatic backdrop to their play area. The well-resourced covered areas allow all-year-round access so children who wish to can play outside in all weathers. Children use the child friendly toilet and wash basins independently for the most part, and know when to ask staff for help with changing wet clothing or if they need a tissue.

Transitions for all children are well thought through. The settling-in visit is used as a time for staff to talk to parents about children and make some observations, which contribute to a baseline assessment. Staff thus know children's starting points and can begin to plan for their next steps. When the time comes for moving on to the next stage, staff have resources and undertake visits with the children so they can talk about any anxieties and explore their feelings in a safe and comforting environment. In the case of children with special educational needs and/ or disabilities, staff show particular sensitivity; the transition is planned many months in advance, as these children need longer to assimilate the changes.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The setting has had some recent changes in leadership, coinciding with the introduction of the revised Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting has generally coped well with these changes and recent improvements have been initiated by the committee. These include reviewing and upgrading both the indoor and outdoor play areas, and the introduction of a generous time allowance for staff to undertake administrative tasks, such as completing children's learning journey records. All recommendations and actions from the previous inspection have been tackled effectively, demonstrating the setting's drive for continuous improvement. The self-evaluation includes a written document, but this is now out-of-date and is under review, a task that the new manager is coordinating by collating evidence in a file before she finalises it.

Some aspects of the leadership and management, however, have received less attention. For example, the ongoing supervision and monitoring of individual staff has not been rigorous or effective. As a result, the quality of teaching is inconsistent and some staff are less confident in delivering the curriculum and planning for their key children's next steps. Consequently some children are not fully challenged to make the best possible progress.

Procedures for safeguarding children are well understood and managed. Staff know how to look out for signs and symptoms of abuse and can refer any concerns appropriately. Parents are advised of the setting's policy and have further information provided on a

notice board.

Information needed to support children's welfare is sought at the time of registration. This includes medical history, allergies and known health needs as well as likes and dislikes. However, currently parents are not asked to provide details of who has parental responsibility for the child. This forms part of the safeguarding and welfare requirements; failure to have this information potentially impacts on children's welfare.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY415474
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	896260
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	63
Name of provider	Southgate Pre-school
Date of previous inspection	14/06/2011
Telephone number	07539973381

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their

Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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