

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 113706

Inspection date 12 March 2008

Inspector Jacqui Lloyd

Setting Address Southwater Village Hall, Church Lane, Southwater, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 9BT

Telephone number 01403 733954

E-mail

Registered person Southwater Village Hall Pre-School

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

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Southwater Pre-School opened in 1974. It operates from two rooms at the Southwater Village Hall, in Southwater, near Horsham, West Sussex. There is a fully enclosed outside area available for outdoor play. The pre-school offers sessional care and serves the local area and surrounding villages.

The pre-school is registered to care for a total of 42 children. There are currently 110 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 86 funded children.

Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting makes provision to support children with additional needs, and those who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times and is open from 09.15 to 12.15 every morning and 13:00 to 16.00 afternoons.

There are 16 members of staff and two permanent members of bank staff working directly with the children. Eight of the staff hold recognised early years qualifications.

The setting receives support from a mentor from the Early Years and Childcare Service who works closely with the local primary schools.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding. There are exceptional procedures implemented by all staff to ensure children's healthy development is given the highest priority. Staff provide children with healthy, nutritious snacks which are presented in a 'snack bar' style format. Children enjoy the opportunity to create their own sandwiches, try different vegetables and eat lots of fresh fruit. This contributes towards their healthy development and allows children to develop their independence by recognising their own individual needs and stopping for a break at their leisure. This also impacts positively on play and learning opportunities as children are offered far more child-initiated uninterrupted play experiences. To further develop children's understanding of healthy eating, staff plan and provide thoughtful and interesting topic work and discuss the benefits of eating a balanced and nutritious diet.

There are excellent procedures in place to enable staff to deal quickly and efficiently to accidents and emergencies as all members of the staff team undertake first aid

training. Staff have also sought additional training to enable them to manage allergies and administer an Epi-pen. Subsequently, staff have a heightened awareness of important health and welfare issues and how to keep children healthy.

Staff maintain excellent records pertaining to accidents and incidents and an innovative format and method for providing parents with a carbon copy helps to ensure essential information is shared with parents.

Children have an excellent understanding of the need to wash their hands. Children have created painted handprints that are displayed in the toilet area. These are used to remind children of the importance of good hygiene. Staff maintain a scrupulously clean and healthy environment by consistently using anti-bacterial spray to clean surfaces before and after activities and by opening windows to ventilate the rooms used by children. This further protects children from the spread of infection and germs.

There are numerous opportunities for children to be physically active and enjoy rigorous exercise. For example, children have access to a climbing frame and tunnel. They also thoroughly enjoy PE sessions, in which they listen to music tapes and join in with actions, dancing and general exercise. These help children to develop muscle strength and co-ordination and contribute towards their healthy development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding. The premises offer an extremely colourful, bright and welcoming environment for children. The group operates in shared premises and yet an enormous amount of time and consideration is given to the presentation of the premises. The walls are adorned with photographs of the children, posters and interesting displays. This helps to make the premises very inviting and creates a totally child-centred environment.

Children's safety and security is given optimum priority throughout the setting with extensive precautions taken to minimise hazards. For example, entry to the setting is securely monitored and all external fire doors are alarmed to ensure staff are alerted in the event that they are opened.

Staff undertake extensive risk assessments on an ongoing basis and are constantly reviewing safety arrangements in the premises to ensure children are always safe and protected from harm. There is a daily written rota that clearly identifies which staff are responsible for checking which areas of the pre-school for each session.

Staff implement excellent procedures to help children develop an awareness of how to play safely and how to take responsibility for themselves. For example, when using the climbing frame, children know that they must be supervised and that the laminated green 'open' sign means they are able to access this equipment and when the red 'closed' sign is displayed they must not use it.

Children are fully protected as staff have an excellent understanding of their responsibilities regarding safeguarding issues. All staff have an extensive knowledge of how to promote children's safety and well-being, as they all complete appropriate training and there are robust policies in place to safeguard children. This contributes fully towards ensuring children's safety.

Staff undertake additional training which contributes towards their excellent understanding of how to keep children safe. For example, all members of staff complete Fire Safety Awareness training. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised regularly with the children which helps to ensure they are familiar with how to exit the building safely and quickly in the event of an emergency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding. Children benefit from the caring and nurturing approach displayed by all the staff. Children are happy and excited on arrival and settle quickly. Children are bursting with energy and enthusiasm and take pleasure in sharing their news and ideas with the staff.

The atmosphere within the pre-school continues to be vibrant and fun throughout the day and children benefit greatly from this. Children are very motivated to learn and approach activities with real interest.

Staff are constantly engaged in play with the children and instinctively know when to guide and direct play and when to move away and allow children the freedom to explore their own ideas and develop their play independently. This enables children the opportunity to experience excellent periods of un-interrupted child initiated play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are making exceptional progress in all areas of learning and show high levels of independence, curiosity and imagination. Staff plan and provide a broad and stimulating range of activities which present relevant and realistic challenges to each individual child.

The staff are skilled and knowledgeable practitioners who make full use of each and every learning opportunity as it arises. They are fully involved in children's play and use careful questioning to extend learning and encourage independent thinking.

Activities are securely planned around the six areas of learning with skilful adaptation and extension to cater for children's individual learning needs. This ensures that all children are fully challenged appropriately. An accurate record of children's progress towards the early learning goals is maintained. Each child has an 'Activity Book' containing examples of their work which is also shared with parents. Staff carry out regular assessments and frequent observations to inform planning and secure further learning. All staff are involved in planning and undertake excellent evaluation of activities to ensure all learning opportunities are maximised.

Children communicate extremely well and enjoy conversation with both their peers and adults. Their listening skills are also highly developed. Staff encourage children to listen to one another during circle time and provide opportunities for children to express themselves freely. Staff use very effective open-ended questioning during play to develop children's thinking and also to extend their vocabulary.

Children have excellent opportunities to access mark making materials and practise their writing skills. Children freely attempt to write during activities. The book corner is very well presented and presents a cosy and inviting area for the children to develop

an interest in books and an enjoyment of reading. Children clearly have a genuine love of books and handle them very carefully. They clearly understand that print carries meaning.

Children develop an excellent understanding of mathematical concepts. There is an excellent range of mathematical resources helping children to count, recognise numbers, develop shape recognition and sorting skills, measure, weigh and tell the time. Children count confidently and staff make use of practical activities to reinforce children's understanding of number and concepts such as 'more than', 'bigger' and 'how many more'. For example, during a group time activity children are assigned 'jobs' for the day and help each other count how many children are present, whether there are more boys than girls and whether the number of children requiring milk for snack time is bigger than the number of children choosing water. When placing the numbers '1' and '5' on the register board, children confidently identify that they have been incorrectly displayed and state that '5, 1' makes 51 one and not 15 as it should have been.

There are excellent opportunities for children to learn about the wider world and develop a positive attitude towards others. They see maps of the world and discuss places visited by children and staff. Well-planned topic work also enables children to learn about and celebrate different cultures, customs and festivals. Children also enjoy superb opportunities to explore their local community by enjoying walks in the local area and visits to the shops and library. Children enjoy experimenting with an interesting range of information and communication technology (ICT) and particularly enjoyed taking photos of their friends using a digital camera. These photos are then displayed in the group and children shriek with joy as they recognise themselves and their friends in the photos.

There is a wealth of opportunities for children to explore using their senses. The current theme of senses has involved very well planned and resourced activities such as painting with 'smelly paint'. Staff added various ingredients to the paint, such as Worcester Sauce and Curry Spices, to add another dimension to the painting activity. Children thoroughly enjoyed trying to identify the smell and laughed with delight as they talked about their painting.

Children are very excited to have the opportunity to take home the pre-school teddy bear 'Footprints' for the weekend and during the school holidays. 'Footprints' also has a journal that he carries with him and children and parents are encouraged to include information and photos about his time spent away from the pre-school. This is a fun and novel way of providing further opportunities for creative thinking and good links with the child's home.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding. Staff have an extremely positive and committed attitude towards promoting equality of opportunity and successfully incorporate this into all aspects of the pre-school practice and provision. For example the 'All About Me' forms include information relating to religion, language spoken at home, siblings, and favourite books and rhymes. This enables staff to gain extensive information about the children, which helps them to fully meet their needs.

There are extensive examples of positive images of diversity reflected in all of the

posters and displays around the room. Children also play with a carefully selected range of toys and books that enable children to learn about differences and develop positive attitudes towards others. Staff plan for a wide range of themes and activities that increase children's awareness of the wider world by celebrating festivals and learning about different cultures. As a result of this, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff are also extremely considerate and sensitive to the needs and beliefs of all parents and show a high regard for this when planning activities and topics.

Children's behaviour is extremely good. All children are very polite and often remind one other during their play to say please and thank you. Disputes amongst children are managed extremely calmly and very effectively, giving children a clear sense of right and wrong. Staff have an exceptional approach towards this. They use skilful questions to help children to develop negotiation skills and an understanding of the effect of their actions on others. For example, when children are asked by staff why only a certain number of children can access an activity at any one time, a child replies by saying that too many children may mean 'it would be a disaster'.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. The staff work extremely hard to establish strong and effective links with home. They provide parents and carers with an abundance of information about the care and education provision and offer opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress on a daily basis and during parents' evenings.

Parents and carers are welcomed into the setting and play an active part on outings by accompanying staff and children on trips to local farms, and walks within the local area. Staff also devise innovative strategies for encouraging dads to become involved in the pre-school and create opportunities for them play an active role during 'Dad's Week'. This involves a range of opportunities for dads to play an active part in the pre-school and precedes Father's Day celebrations for the children.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding. There are robust recruitment and induction procedures in place. New staff are provided with excellent support to enable them to become familiar with the group's policies and procedures. The manager also uses an additional record to ensure staff have read, understood and are able to implement them.

Appraisals are used effectively to identify future development needs of the staff and to review practice. This contributes towards the highly efficient organisation of the pre-school.

The leadership and management are outstanding. The manager is exceptionally motivated. She is an inspiring and dynamic leader, with extensive knowledge, experience and professional qualifications in early years care and education. She is totally supported by the supervisors and staff members who show a keen interest in, and dedication towards, the development and success of the group. The manager is constantly seeking to develop and improve the nursery education programme through continuous review and evaluation. The staff team consists of early years practitioners, who have a clear understanding of how children learn and develop through quality, rich play and learning experiences. Staff development is regarded as

high priority and all staff are keen to continually develop and broaden their knowledge and skills. As a result of this, the delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum is continuously improved.

Staff have devised activity prompt sheets that are displayed around the room, alongside activities, giving useful reminders and prompts to staff about the potential learning opportunities of each activity. This is an innovative idea and helps to keep the focus on the provision of high quality education.

The daily routine is very effective. Staff organise their time, space and resources extremely well to meet the needs of all the children. Staff respond to the needs and interests of the children and deploy themselves exceptionally well. This enables them to offer high levels of support and attention to the children.

Staff maintain very accurate and comprehensive records and documents relating to all aspects of the care and education provision. Well-written policies and procedures are implemented successfully by all staff and reflect the high quality service. This contributes towards the effective organisation of the pre-school.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection the setting agreed to review their written policies and include details of the complaints policy. The setting have fully reviewed and updated all the written policies, including the complaints policy and make these available to all parents. This contributes towards the safe and efficient management of the group and helps to ensure parents are fully informed.

At the previous nursery education inspection there were no significant weaknesses but it was recommended that consideration was given to increasing opportunities for children to develop their independence and also be able to measure and record their findings. Since the last inspection, staff have reviewed many aspects of the routine and created numerous opportunities, for example, the 'snack bar' style snack time, hand-washing routines, 'jobs' for the children and choices given to the children all provide opportunities for children to become increasingly independent.

Staff have provided many new resources that enable children opportunities to measure and record their findings. These include tape measures, height charts, and low level displays that the children are able to use during play.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This report available from the www.ofsted.gov.uk/reports/

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