



Southwood Family Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109921
Inspection date	23 November 2006
Inspector	Hazel Farrant
Setting Address	Gower Lodge, Fleet Road, Cove, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 9RA
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Registered person	Southwood Family 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 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?

Southwood Family Pre-School opened in 1970. It operates from the Gower Lodge scout building in Farnborough. The hall consists of a large room, which is divided into play areas. Children have the use of an enclosed outside play area.

There are currently 35 children on roll. This includes 17 children aged three and four years old who are receipt of nursery education funding. Children come from the local community and surrounding area and attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens four days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.00 until 11.30 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and 12.30 until 15.00 on Monday and Thursday afternoons.

Four full-time and two part-time staff work with the children. Two have early years qualifications to NVQ level 3. The setting receives support from a teacher and mentor from the local school and the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and welfare is well maintained due to the staff's appropriate first aid training and their accurate recording of any accidents that children sustain during their time at the setting. However, not all entries in the medication record are signed by parents to acknowledge administration to their child.

Children are beginning to understand the importance of good hygiene routines. For example, children wash their hands after using the toilet and staff encourage children to cover their mouths when they cough. All areas of the setting are maintained to a good standard of cleanliness, the kitchen and toilet areas are clean and well ordered.

Children make their own decision of when to have their snacks and drinks because a 'milk bar' operates throughout the session. Children use wet wipes before they eat their snack. Some children confidently pour their own drinks of milk or water, staff offer appropriate levels of support to less able children. Dietary needs and individual preferences are catered for. Children choose from milk or water and a variety of fresh fruit such as, banana, apple and oranges. Children discuss the importance of a healthy diet; one child said that 'salad' was healthy during story time. Snack times are sociable, children know the routine well. Name labels are used to ensure that all children have the opportunity of a drink and a snack. Water is always available throughout the session so that children do not become dehydrated.

The setting has use of an enclosed outside area. However, children have limited opportunities to play outside in the fresh air during inclement weather. This is due to a large amount of potholes in the car park, which regularly fill with rainwater. The manager is currently looking into ways of addressing this issue. Children are developing their gross motor skills through activities indoors when they are involved in climbing and balancing. However, the setting does not always plan the daily routine effectively enough to ensure that children have daily opportunities to take part in physical play. Children are developing good fine motor skills when they use crayons, pencils, scissors and glue spatulas during their art and craft sessions. They also confidently use the mouse when they are playing on the computer.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery staff provide a very warm welcome to the children and their parents. The setting is attractively decorated throughout with displays of the children's artwork and interest tables. Staff ensure that the hall is prepared for the children's arrival. Parents bring the children into the setting, children look for their individual named peg and hang their outdoor clothes up.

Furniture and equipment is clean and well maintained. The setting has plenty of low tables and chairs enabling the staff to be flexible in the arrangement of the rooms and play areas. Toys and resources are all stored at low level so that the children are able to self-select and make independent choices. The hall is well laid out, there is plenty of space which means that the children are able to move around freely and safely.

The children benefit from playing in a safe environment. The staff carry out regular risk assessments both inside and when using the outside area. Entry to the setting is gained by callers ringing the doorbell. There are good strategies in place to ensure that all people entering the premises sign in. Visitors are requested to sign the appropriate book and arrangements for children to be collected by other authorised adults are recorded appropriately. Children practise fire evacuation of the premises on a regular basis, which adds to their safety.

Children's safety and welfare is further safeguarded through the staff's clear knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms of child abuse. They are also aware of the reporting procedures to follow to ensure the children's protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident in the setting. They arrive and quickly settle into the daily routines, which they know well. The children are supported and encouraged to make decisions in their choice of activities. This assists them to make independent choices of activities and to think about what they want to achieve. Children try new skills such as using scissors during craft activities. The staff support the children well, they are kind and caring and are aware of their individual needs. They have knowledge of Birth to three matters and plan with this framework in mind. They provide an interesting and varied day for the children, who have regular opportunities to experience different textures and mediums. For example, children experiment using rollers and cutters whilst model making with play dough.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff's knowledge of how children learn through play is effective to enable children to progress well. They demonstrate a sound awareness of the Foundation Stage in their delivery of play experiences for the children. The routine to the day enables children to have access to creative materials, construction and imaginary play materials at all times. A focused activity is undertaken daily which is planned to enable staff to observe children's progress in specific areas of learning. It enables the staff to focus on learning outcomes for the range of children they are working with. Children's progress is monitored and recorded by their key worker. Children enjoy the focused activity which they undertake. For example children express their thoughts and ideas using a range of paints and brushes available at the easel. Curriculum planning covers all areas of learning and indicates the children's intended learning outcomes. However, plans do not clearly show extensions to activities for more able children. Staff evaluate the activities but do not record information meaningfully to inform future planning.

Children are involved in the day to day routines of the nursery such as tidying up and pouring out their own drinks. Children have established good relationships with one another and enjoy each other's company. They show concern and consideration for one another. For example, children help one another put on their art aprons.

Children are very confident speakers, they engage readily in conversation with known adults and one another. They enjoy books and are beginning to read familiar stories with staff members during the session. Children are interested in letters and sounds. They are excited by sharing items they have brought in from home connected to the letter of the week. Children delight in telling their peers 'J' for jar, jigsaw and jelly. Children have some opportunities to mark make, however staff do not always encourage them to attempt to write their own name on their art work.

Children are learning awareness of the time and are showing interest in beginning to solve mathematical problems through using good computer programs, ably supported by an adult. Through a variety of practical activities such as cooking and water play, children are learning about weight, volume and capacity. They count during daily routines such as, at circle time children count to see how many are present in their group today. Children check to see if there are sufficient chairs available before sitting down at the 'milk bar'.

Children enjoy learning about the natural world. They talk about the weather and what clothes they need to wear to keep warm during the winter. Children took great interest observing a 'cherry picker' in the nearby car park, they are beginning to learn about large machinery. The children are making links with people in the locality, at Christmas they enjoy singing to the elderly. Children have also enjoyed a visit from the officers of the local fire station and the librarian.

Children have good, regular opportunities to express their creativity through role and imaginary play, as well as dressing up. They enjoy making models in the construction area and their art work is displayed around the room which gives them a sense of pride and ownership. Children express themselves freely through paint and collage activities where they learn about texture, shape and colour. Children listen to music regularly and enjoy singing their wide repertoire of songs and rhymes, musical instruments are readily available.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle very well, they flourish in the pre-school because they are confident and have developed very good independent skills. For example, children take on responsibilities within the pre-school such as, helping to serve snacks and pour out drinks. Staff value all children and include them by providing exceptional care and support which is recognised by parents and highly valued by them.

Children's behaviour is exceptional and they show high levels of independence. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and act as positive role models. Children take good care of one another and display great enjoyment in making new friends. They play extremely well together,

learning to share and take turns of popular resources. Children negotiate with each other with confidence.

Highly effective systems are in place to support each child and their family, ensuring that they are fully included into the provision and are able to fully contribute to the setting. All children and their families including those with learning disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language receive outstanding support from staff and other agencies. This enables children to thrive and make excellent individual progress. Children are encouraged to celebrate each other's achievements. Strong and secure relationships are established across the provision between staff, children and their peers. For example, children receive gold stars and stickers for a job well done. An exiting range of activities and resources, such as dressing up clothes, books and play figures help children to recognise and value diversity of cultures, gender, age and disability. They find out about how different people celebrate their beliefs and traditions. As a result, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

A superb partnership with parents contributes significantly to children's wellbeing in the nursery. Parents speak very highly of the care their child receives, commenting that staff are very helpful, approachable and provide plenty of information about their child's achievements. A highly effective key-worker system in place ensures positive communication links and keeps parents well informed about their child's progress. Parents are very well informed about the setting through welcome packs, parents' handbooks and regular newsletters. A file of comprehensive policies and procedures is also available for parents to view. A well-supported and enthusiastic parents' committee fund raise for the pre-school. This helps immensely with additional resources to further enhance a rich learning environment for all children.

The partnership with parents and carers of children is outstanding. Staff pay high priority to establishing and securing strong links between home and the setting. They ensure parents are actively involved in their child's education. For example, children delight in taking library books home to share and enjoy with their parents and carers. Staff continually work together with parents to assess their child's ongoing achievements and progress with regular informal and formal meetings. Parents receive extensive support in extending their child's learning at home through information about the curriculum and planned activities in the newsletters. For example, by helping their child bring in an item from home to promote the current topic theme and letter of the week.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. The manager of the nursery supports the staff well. She holds regular staff meetings and has effective communication systems in place. All necessary information is discussed daily regarding children's care and well-being. The manager is proactive in developing the skills of her staff and encourages regularly training to build on good practices already in place. Staff have daily delegated areas of responsibility to ensure the smooth running of the pre-school. There are areas of development within the pre-school that the manager is keen to pursue such as improving the outside areas used for physical play.

Staff have been vetted to make sure that they are suitable to work with the children. They have built up a good relationship with them, they provide a happy, welcoming environment where the children are able to feel comfortable, confident and able to learn. Caring and dedicated staff work well together as a team supported by an effective and hardworking committee. Required documentation is in order which ensures that children's safety and welfare is protected. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, children are now protected from hot water pipes in the main hall. Staff regularly monitor the surface temperature of the radiators. Documentation is reviewed and updated to reflect current policies and procedures.

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.

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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 parents sign the record of medication consistently.

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):

- maximize opportunities for children to mark make during every day activities and to take part in physical play both inside and outside
- further develop planning records to clearly show extension to activities and evaluate meaningfully so that the planning cycle is fully effective in respect of children's learning.

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