

Southborough Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY345896
Inspection date	10 July 2007
Inspector	Susan Linda Capon
Setting Address	Southborough Primary School, Southborough Lane, BROMLEY, BR2 8AA
Telephone number	07751 251 840
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Registered person	Kathleen Hardy
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?

Southborough Pre-School was registered in 2007. The group has been established since 1997 under previous ownership. It is one of two local groups owned by the current provider. The pre-school is situated in the grounds of Southborough Primary School in Petts Wood, in the London Borough of Bromley. The children have access to two indoor play areas. There are associated toilets and kitchen. A secure outdoor play area is also available and during the colder weather the group have use of the large school hall for physical activities. Children from the local community attend the group.

The group is registered for 28 children from 2 to under 5 years at any time. There are currently 59 children on roll. Of these, 50 receive funding for nursery education.

The pre-school opens every weekday during term time only. There are two sessions each day. These are between 09.15 until 11.45 and 12.45 until 15.15.

The provision supports children with disabilities and learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language.

A team of eight qualified staff work directly with the children including the provider. Of these one is qualified to NVQ4, one has a teaching qualification and the others are NVQ2 and NVQ3 qualified. Five staff work with the children at each session including the day to day manager who is supernumerary.

The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. They receive regular support from the local early years team, area special educational needs co-ordinator and Southborough School.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

All staff protect the children from infection and cross-contamination through the sound health and safety procedures, used during each session. The named staff member for health and safety has undertaken training in this area and ensures the in-depth procedures are fully implemented by all staff. Staff check the premises are clean before the children arrive. They regularly check the toilets are clean, during the session to prevent infection. Staff use anti-bacterial spray to clean the tables between use. Nappy changing routines include cleaning the mat thoroughly between use, wearing gloves and an apron and using the nappy disposal unit for all soiled nappies.

All the children use good hygiene routines for themselves. Older children understand the importance of washing their hands before they have their snack and after using the toilet. They explain it is "to get rid of any germs which might make them unwell". The pictorial signs in the toilets help to remind younger children to wash their hands correctly. Staff discuss the importance of cleaning their teeth after meals and particularly before they go to bed.

The sound accident and medication procedures ensure the children are safe at all times. All medication and the first aid kit are stored out of children's reach. Staff take smaller first aid kits on outings. Most staff hold a first aid qualification and some are trained to administer an epipen if required. Staff complete detailed records for all medication administered and accidents in the pre-school. Parents sign the records. The provider regularly monitors the accident book to check if changes are required to ensure the children are safe at all times. For example, many accidents took place in the garden. The garden is now set up in a different way to prevent children having accidents.

Parents know they must not send their child to the pre-school if their child is unwell. They have access to an excellent range of information relating to childhood illness and the incubation periods involved. Staff advise parents of any infection in the group. For example, a notice of chicken pox in the group is on the parent notice board. Staff follow good arrangements when a child becomes unwell, during the session.

All the children enthusiastically play outdoors every day when possible. The space is well-organised with a climbing area made safe, using bark on the ground. The garden area is popular with all the children and they particularly enjoy making mud pies in the wheelbarrow. They develop their climbing and sliding skills, using the large apparatus. They enjoy balancing on the balance equipment and pedalling the bikes. Additional quiet activities allow children to rest and relax in the shade of the trees as they play the musical instruments and draw pictures.

Children freely access fresh drinking water throughout the session. Staff take jugs and beakers outdoors during the hot weather. The children are learning the importance of taking regular drinks to prevent de-hydration. They are beginning to recognise how their body works and take a rest or drink when they get hot from running around.

All the children enjoy healthy, nutritious snacks every day. They discuss their favourites from the apple, pear, carrot and cucumber pieces readily available. The snack bar system gives the children the opportunity to eat when they are ready. This is particularly important for those who have not had breakfast. Children use a spoon to serve themselves to prevent cross-contamination. Staff sit with the children, ensuring any specific dietary requirements are met at all times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Staff greet all children and parents by name, making them feel valued and part of the group. The parents and staff share any relevant information about the children before leaving the child for the session. This keeps both parties up to date and informed about the child's care.

The children spend their time in extremely pleasant surroundings as the premises are bright, clean, warm and welcoming to all. Colourful displays and children's art work make it their own. The premises are well-maintained and in good repair throughout. The new owner will be re-furbishing the premises indoors and outdoors, during the summer break.

The premises are well-organised throughout, providing the children with suitable areas for playing, resting, "messy" activities, quiet time and outdoor play. The children have ample space to move around freely between the activities available. The low storage units enable children to freely access a broad range of activities for themselves. They are learning the importance of tidying things away afterwards.

Children access an extensive range of toys and equipment maintaining their interest, keeping them stimulated at all times. All equipment is well-organised, labelled with pictures and words, enabling children to make their own selection and developing their reading skills. All toys, equipment and furniture are clean, safe and suitable for the children's use. Staff immediately remove any damaged or broken equipment to prevent accidents. The group uses the local library and toy library to extend the resources.

Staff undertake daily risk assessments of the premises prior to the children's arrival, ensuring it is safe for their use. They lock the gates once all the children are on the premises, preventing unwanted visitors accessing the site. Staff can see the outdoor area through the low level windows and have a telephone on site for use in an emergency.

Staff check the outdoor equipment is dry and safe for the children's use each day. They remind the children of the group rules, advising them of the dangers of running around indoors and close to the climbing apparatus. This helps prevent accidents.

The effective arrival and departure systems in place prevent children leaving the premises unnoticed. There are good adult to child ratios and excellent supervision of the children throughout the session. All staff cover one another well particularly when all areas of the premises are in use. Visitors to the site sign the register and show their identification if required. They are not alone with the children, keeping the children safe at all times.

Children are aware of the dangers of matches and fire. They discuss the dangers as staff light candles to celebrate a child's birthday at registration time. The children know that fire can kill you. They participate in the regular fire drills and know the importance of listening closely to the adults' instructions to help keep them safe. Staff maintain detailed records, identifying any potential problems which may need addressing in the future. For example, the reaction of a child when doing the fire drill.

Excellent outings procedures are in place. The new provider will not undertake any outings off the school site until the staff are sure they know the children well.

Children are fully protected by the sound procedures in place for managing child protection issues. The named person has in-depth knowledge and understanding of how to manage any concerns. She shares her previous knowledge and experience with other staff, ensuring they are fully conversant with this area. The staff member has booked additional training to ensure her skills are up to date. All parents are fully aware of the group's policies and procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

All the children enter the room enthusiastically looking forward to the broad range of activities available for the session. They are keen to be involved in the group discussion, relating to the topic of the week, sharing their ideas and views about rockets.

All the children have confidence in the setting, demonstrating their independence skills as they select their own resources for play, put on the painting overall and use the toilet without help.

Staff provide a balanced programme of adult-led and free choice activities each session. Emphasis is placed on "learning through play". Whole group activities are kept short, preventing the children from becoming bored and restless. The children explore the areas of learning they are interested in each day. Focus activities ensure children participate in the full range of activities each week.

Staff incorporate the Birth to three matters and Foundation Stage documentation into the plans to ensure all children's individual needs are met at each session.

During the snack-time staff sit with the children, supporting their learning and development. They discuss healthy eating and the importance of keeping themselves well. All the children enthusiastically share their news and discuss the day's activities, helping less confident children to develop good self-esteem and feel valued.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are making excellent progress through the early learning goals and stepping stones. Several children achieve them before moving onto infant school. They are interested and motivated to learn through the innovative activities provided by the staff. The topic about transport and space encouraged children to build their own models and draw their own designs, promoting their confidence and self-esteem. The children concentrate for long periods of time. For example, as they complete the rocket puzzle. They have made firm friends in the group and co-operate well with one another as they play. Several children enjoyed collecting water to add to the mud to make mud pies, working as a team. They are developing an awareness of their own culture and beliefs and those of the other children.

Children use good language skills and sentence construction as they talk and play with one another. They clearly discuss their ideas with the adults as they participate in the drawing and building activities. For example, they discuss how they would get to the moon. All the children enjoy listening to stories and know there is a beginning, middle and end. They eagerly participate what will happen next as they listen to 'Whatever Next'. Staff use props to encourage the children to develop good listening and sitting skills at story time. Children enjoy exploring sounds of letters as they listen for the letter starting their name before going off to play after registration time. Many know other words beginning with their letter and staff support this area of development throughout the group at other activities. Some children can write their own name, using recognisable letters. Others enjoy regular opportunities to practise mark making as they write messages for the staff, make lists and write their names on their painting and drawings.

Children are developing good mathematical skills as they confidently count to ten and beyond. Many children competently count to twenty. Staff encourage simple addition and subtraction skills as children identify if more or less boys or girls are attending each day. The children enthusiastically counted backwards from ten to one when they launched the rocket and marked how far it had travelled on their paper. They recognise a range of different shapes. For example, a child made a circle with her cucumber halves. Staff discuss big, small and high when they talk about the children's stickle brick tower. Children explore Rangoli patterns as they learn about Diwali and create patterns using the comparison bears. They enjoy comparing and discussing changes as they participate in cooking activities.

Children enjoy exploring their surroundings and the range of objects in the setting, using all their senses. They enjoy playing with the dough, sand and water. Children experiment with the paint to see how colours change when mixed together and enjoy watching how the water changes the mud in the garden. They discuss the plants they have grown, recognising the birds have eaten all their strawberries. They know the plants need water to grow. Children were interested in learning about different types of transport both at home and abroad. For example, how people use elephants in other countries. They competently complete computer activities without support. For example, Tiggers biggest bounce. Children enjoy learning about other languages and attempt to write Chinese numerals for themselves.

All the children enjoy physical play on a regular basis. They have good co-ordination skills as they climb and jump in the garden. They enjoy throwing the ball into the basketball or knocking the skittles over. Children play imaginatively indoors and outdoors as they take their baby to the shops in the buggy or cook the dinner in the home corner. They are developing an awareness of keeping healthy and know they should use the shade of the trees when the weather is hot. They competently use a wide range of large and small equipment developing their muscles. For example, sewing with a needle and thread and carrying water in the watering cans.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to explore colour, texture and shapes through the activities provided. They particularly enjoy getting messy when foot painting. All the children enjoy singing songs and rhymes. They enthusiastically join in with the group morning song singing tunefully and with gusto. They enjoy exploring a range of sounds using the musical instruments and follow the pattern and repetition when listening to the Bear Hunt story. They are developing their imagination and creative skills as they make up their own games. For example, a child pretended to be a policeman arresting the staff.

The in-depth planning is topic based and covers all areas of the Foundation Stage equally. Weekly plans identify the individual area of learning, range of activities, adult role and the

individual needs of all the children attending. This ensures more or less able children are fully included, offering them suitable challenges to promote progress and development at their level. All staff have a sound understanding of how to deliver and support the children throughout the setting, incorporating open questions to enable children to think for themselves. The regular observations identify the next steps for each child. Parents share the information, relating to their child's progress and development with their child's key worker, keeping them updated and well-informed at all times. Staff complete a detailed report and file when the children leave the group to attend school. These are well-presented and include children's photographs, art work and staff observations. Parents are encouraged to comment on their child's progress and those seen identify how pleased they are with this information, thanking the staff for their hard work and input.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All the children and their families are valued and respected. Children attend from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. The extensive policy for equal opportunities provides awareness of other cultures to help prevent any misunderstanding occurring when working with the children. Some information is readily available in a range of languages. Posters around the premises display information in other languages. Parents share their language with the group. For example, a Chinese parent labelled the sand equipment using her language in addition to the pictures and English labels.

The children access a wide range of toys, equipment and activities promoting positive images for all areas of equal opportunities. Children are learning about other people and the world about them. This includes exploring different cultures and festivals. For example, Chinese New Year and Diwali. All the equipment is available to all the children. For example, the boys enjoy dressing-up in the sari and girls climb on the large apparatus.

New children settle quickly as they make an initial visit with their parents. This helps them and their parents to familiarise themselves with the setting and the staff. This in turn enables parents to feel confident to leave their child in the group's care happy in the knowledge their child is settled and occupied.

The group provides excellent support for children with disabilities and learning difficulties. The special educational needs co-ordinator in the group is experienced and trained in this area. She ensures all staff are up to date with changes to the procedures and legislation. The co-ordinator liaises closely with the parents and any other professional involved in the child's care to ensure continuity of care. She keeps the child's own key worker fully informed and updated. Activities including "What's in the box" using Makaton signing encourage children to be fully involved and maintain their interest.

Parents of children with learning difficulties express their pleasure at the progress their child has made in the group. Staff take their time to discuss the child's progress and development particularly supporting parents who may also have difficulties themselves. This enables both parents and children to develop confidence and self-esteem.

This is a positive approach. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

All the children behave well. They know the group rules and recognise the importance of co-operating with one another and the staff as they play. They share the toys and equipment well, using an egg-timer to quickly settle the occasional dispute.

Staff use positive behaviour management, praising and encouraging the children all the time. Minimal behaviour management is required during a session as staff quietly and calmly remind the children not to run around the room, explaining the possible outcome if they continue to do so. This helps the children to understand why the rules are in place.

The extensive policy and procedures for managing behaviour acknowledges rough and tumble play and fantasy play can lead to someone getting hurt. Staff are aware of how to manage these situations appropriately.

The partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents are very pleased with the way the transition to the new provider was managed, keeping them fully informed at all times. They recognise the professionalism and organised approach she brings to the setting and feel they are fully updated about all areas of the pre-school. Arrangements for open events ensure all parents can attend if they wish. For example, evening and weekend appointments are available. Parents find all staff pleasant, friendly, helpful and approachable. They feel it is a very caring environment and are happy to leave their child in the staff care. Their children enjoy attending and look forward to seeing the staff and their friends. Parents find the provider receptive to their comments and suggestions, recognising some are now in place. They are aware they can be as involved in the group as they wish and some enjoy helping in the setting on a regular basis. All parents are aware of how to make a complaint and know a record should be available to them if required.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

An appropriate staff team cares for the children. All staff are fully qualified in childcare. The children benefit from their commitment to attend training opportunities to keep abreast of any changes. A range of training has been undertaken since the transition of ownership, showing dedication to their role as child carers. Training includes Birth to three framework, sensory activities and promoting diversity. Other training is booked for the near future.

The previous staff team work well with the new provider and manager, providing good continuity of care for the children attending the group. Excellent staff ratios ensure the children receive good care and attention during the session. Staff are able to offer small group and some individual attention as the manager is supernumerary. The group has excellent contingency plans to ensure sufficient staff are always available to cover sickness, training and holidays. For example, staff covered one another for school sports day.

All staff are valued and undertake all roles in the group, enabling them to develop their all-round skills. For example the rota plans for all staff to be in charge of story time or registration at some time during the week. This helps to keep the children and staff enthusiastic, interested and keen.

The in-depth operational plan works very well, ensuring all areas of the pre-school are covered at all times. All staff are fully conversant with the details. The premises, equipment and staff are well-organised, enabling them to provide quality care for the children. Individual staff

strengths are recognised as they manage particular areas of the group. For example, behaviour management and child protection.

Staff operate an excellent registration system, ensuring they are always aware of everyone on site at any time. They record the children's arrival in the daily register, list names on a white board including staff and visitors and take a head count shortly after the session starts. Children leave their name card on the snack area notice board, providing an additional check later in the day. This keeps the children safe in the event of an emergency.

The detailed records and in-depth policies procedures underpin the well-being, care and learning of all the children attending. They are well maintained and stored confidentially in a locked cabinet.

The provider keeps abreast of any changes to the National Standards and is fully aware the Birth to three matters framework is shortly to be replaced. She will ensure her staff receive appropriate training to deliver the new framework as required.

The leadership and management is outstanding. The provider is fully committed to providing good quality care at all times. She is currently undertaking the Pre-School Learning Alliance Accreditation finishing by the end of the next term. She has clear plans to continue to improve the setting for the next term, including the provision of a more relaxing book corner and quiet area for the younger children.

The provider has high expectations of her staff team, presenting herself as a good role model as she works in a professional manner. Regular staff appraisals ensure individual strengths and weaknesses are identified. Staff are encouraged to attend additional training to maintain their individual role and responsibilities in the group. Regular staff meetings ensure everyone is fully aware of what is happening in the group, including activity planning.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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