



Start Point Sholing

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	161033
Inspection date	06 March 2006
Inspector	Judith Reed / Jacqueline Munden
Setting Address	Wood Close, Sholing, Southampton, Hampshire, SO19 0SG
Telephone number	023 8036 3309
E-mail	daynursery@startpoint-sholing.southampton.sch.uk
Registered person	Start Point Sholing
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional care, Crèche

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?

Start Point Sholing opened in 2000. There are three types of provision within the centre, a day nursery, a sessional nursery, and a crèche which is run alongside the centre's training provision. The centre is situated in the Sholing area of Southampton, and serves the local and wider communities. The centre is a training facility for early years workers, and also the play services toy library is based within the building. The centre is advised by a management group and overseen by the Southampton Early

Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

The sessional nursery opened in September 2000 as one of the first elements of provision within this Early Years Centre. There are currently 54 children on roll, and they are all funded 3 and 4 year olds. The sessional provision is part of Southampton City Councils Inclusion Project and supports a number of special needs children. In the day nursery there are currently 32 children on roll, this includes 1 funded 3 year old, and 10 funded 4 year olds and children attend for a variety of sessions. The day nursery is able to support children with special needs as well as those with English as an additional language.

The sessional nursery opens five days a week during school term times, and sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45, and 13:00 until 15:30. The day nursery opens five days a week all year round, from 08:00 until 18:00 Monday to Thursday and 08:00 until 16:00 on Fridays. The crèche is open when required to support training activities.

There are nine members of staff who work in the day nursery, six staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level III. There are two staff members currently working toward a recognised early years qualification. There are six staff who work in the sessional nursery, all have early years qualifications. There are four qualified members of staff employed to work in the crèche, when required. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children and staff follow good hygiene routines. Older children take themselves to the toilet and independently use facilities. They are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. All children are well supported when learning to use the toilet and nappy changes remain private at all times. Children can easily access wall mounted tissue dispensers around the rooms as well as outside in the garden. They dispose of tissues in the waste bin. This encourages children to care for themselves and be independent. Accidents are recorded accurately although some parental signatures are not obtained when necessary and therefore parents are not kept informed at all times. All staff in the day nursery recently completed First Aid training together, however no members of staff in the sessional nursery hold current paediatric first aid training certificates. First Aid kits are available throughout the centre.

Children take part in regular activities which promote their physical development. Children from the sessional and day nurseries have free access to the large, well planned garden. Children develop a wide range of skills including climbing and sliding, riding, pushing, pulling, scooting and pedalling wheeled equipment. They climb low trees or run around as well as experimenting with the pulley system set up

over the sandpit, lifting the bucket and transporting sand. Children are keen to go out to play whatever the weather, wrapping up warmly when it's cold and wearing Wellington boots when it rains. This encourages discussion about keeping warm and dry. They may stay under the covered area when raining, taking part in a range of different activities whilst still getting fresh air and experiencing the elements. Children relish having the space to run around and natural areas to explore. Children move confidently and safely around the environment. They are reminded not to run indoors and encouraged to take more boisterous play outdoors. The water play area is carefully monitored when it is in use and children enjoy splashing, floating activities and cooling down in hot weather. Children using the crèche have their own secure garden area with a range of toys and activities including cut logs to sit or climb on.

In the day nursery children are offered nutritious and healthy meals and snacks. Senior staff monitor the menu and ensure all recipes are healthy and good quality ingredients are used. Breakfast is offered as required and children have a choice of cereals and/or toast with a variety of spreads. A mid-morning snack is available and children choose from popcorn, dried fruit, or fresh fruit pieces. They have milk or water to drink. At lunch time the children go into the main hall dining area and serve themselves from serving dishes. This helps develop many skills including good manners and turn taking. They sit at low level tables with staff and talk informally.

Children particularly enjoy slices of garlic bread accompanying their meal. They are offered second helpings when available and a pudding such as fruit smoothies or banana custard. An afternoon snack is prepared and children have this in the nursery room. They choose from an interesting range of dried fruits such as cranberries and cherries as well as savoury crackers and mashed tuna. Drinks of juice, water and milk are offered. A high tea is served to children later in the afternoon. This often consists of pasta, jacket potatoes or sandwiches with yoghurt or fruit. Water drinks are available throughout the day.

In the sessional nursery children are encouraged to plan what they will have for snack, compiling a picture and word shopping list and then making a visit to the local shop to buy the items. This encourages discussion about healthy eating and caring for teeth. Children are provided with a wide range of healthy and nutritious snacks as well as some occasional treats. The café style system encourages children to learn social skills, to be independent and about self care as they chat, make selections and clear away their plates and cups. Children with special needs use picture cards to select their choice and are well supported when eating. The weekly menu is displayed to keep parents informed and staff are aware of all children's dietary requirements. In the crèche children are offered a healthy snack including a range of fruit and vegetable pieces with cheese and toast.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well planned and resourced centre which is safe, secure, warm and very welcoming. The day and sessional nurseries share an entrance lobby with access via a locked door and door bell. The day nursery is in a planned, flexible

environment where younger children are protected by use of temporary barriers and gates. Accessible toilets and nappy changing areas are available and a sleep room is provided. Children can observe activity in the separate kitchen area over a low breakfast bar. They access activities throughout the room such as the role play area, writing area, book area with cosy settee, or messy play area with painting and play dough. The sessional nursery also provides a rich, child centred environment. There is plenty of space both in and outdoors, which is used creatively and innovatively. Children have free access to the main play room which is divided into different areas such as art and creative play, dough and clay table, computer table and comfortable book corner. The café and kitchen area is also available. The role play area is changed to provide suggestions of play reflecting real life. At present it is a hospital/surgery. The soft play/sensory room is a wonderful resource for all children but particularly those with special needs. The shared outdoor area is well used as an extension of the learning environment. It has many different areas including hard surfaces, enabling all weather play, and grassed more natural sites. Sails are fitted over the sandpit in hot weather to provide shade when playing. There are many trees that also offer shade. The community room is used by a number of groups including the crèche. The room is divided with furniture and accessible toy storage units. A well fenced and securely gated garden is available for outside play.

The very wide range of good quality resources, furniture and equipment meet the needs of all children, including those who are very young and those with special needs. Resources are of good quality and in good condition. Children can easily access toys and play materials independently and many items promote equality of opportunity. They are encouraged and helped in finding and returning equipment as boxes are labelled. In the sessional nursery silhouetted pictures show where woodwork tools and creative materials belong.

Children are protected and kept safe by experienced and knowledgeable staff who help them to understand hazards. Temporary barriers, with gates, are used in the day nursery to keep younger children safe and all door handles are at high level. Children resting in the sleep room are not observed frequently at some times of the day, although a monitor is in place at all times. Children and staff in the sessional nursery conduct daily risk assessments of the outside play area and children learn about keeping safe and protecting others.

Children are safeguarded by knowledgeable, well trained staff who understand their professional duty regarding child protection. The child protection liaison officer ensures good communication with other agencies and supports staff as necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the setting and offered many excellent opportunities for interesting activities. They are encouraged to be independent and develop socially, choosing their own activities. Children relate well to adults and their peers. They are interested and involved in their learning and play. Children attending the day and sessional nurseries follow a theme for the week while being offered a continuous

curriculum. Younger children in the day nursery use a small protected play area with toys including play mats and musical items. They are also involved in the wider nursery area and staff encourage them saying "Shall we go and look together?". Key workers know the children very well and plan their development using the Birth to Three curriculum alongside observations. Children build positive relationships with staff and begin to communicate. They develop independence and gain control of their bodies while learning about rules.

Children using the crèche are offered a number of activities as well as being encouraged to help themselves to toys from storage. Staff provide a range of messy play activities including painting, collage with glue and play dough. Children enjoy playing outside in the garden and take every opportunity to use the tricycles, scooters, push along toys and the sand pit.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff in both the day and sessional nurseries are knowledgeable regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum. In the day nursery they plan around children's interests and use the Record of Achievement very well to note progress in children's development ensuring all areas of learning are included. The manager and staff plan together and the manager monitors the curriculum to meet the needs of the children attending. Further development of the curriculum is required to meet the needs of children who are more able. In the sessional nursery the early years teacher creates the very thorough plans to ensure the needs of individual children are met. Children follow the High Scope method of teaching and plan their own activities for the session. Most children behave well and staff are skilled at managing challenging situations. There is a good variation of free play and planned activities in adult led small and large groups. Children's development is recorded informally and formally on a regular basis. Records are thoroughly evaluated and lines of development are planned. Children with special needs are included at all times and activities are adapted as necessary. Staff receive support from area special needs co-ordinators as well as educational psychologists and speech therapists. All staff are well trained and they are encouraged to keep their training up-to-date. Staff use effective strategies for teaching children and make learning interesting. They encourage learning by asking probing questions and offer good explanations when required.

Children respond well to different experiences in both areas of the setting. They move around freely and are actively involved in their own learning. Children are confident and have good self-esteem, speaking confidently. Children try new experiences such as different foods. They build good relationships with other children and the staff. Children are learning to negotiate and staff encourage them to express themselves in words. They put on their own coats and boots independently before playing outside. Children share outside play facilities and enjoy outings to places of interest such as shops to purchase snack foods.

Children "sign" the sheet when they have their snacks. They learn that writing is used for different purposes by writing shopping lists, diaries and cards as well as copying their names at the writing table and seeing name labels around the settings. They learn sounds and letters through skilled staff who help children recognise the letters

in their name when labelling art work. Children speak with confidence and enjoy sharing stories in small groups. Children frequently ask staff to read to them.

Children count regularly throughout the day. They count plates and cups or number of cars in the garage. Skilled staff use incidental opportunities to introduce number, shape and size into conversation. Children recognise that crackers are square, triangle or rectangle. They use different shaped blocks to build a path, selecting appropriate size blocks so there are no spaces in between. Children attending the day nursery have few opportunities to solve problems or calculate.

Children have many opportunities to explore the natural world as they frequently use the outside play area. They observe changes in the trees as well as planting seeds and caring for the growing vegetables. Children join in many cooking activities and make play dough or food to eat such as pancakes. Children are aware of the routine of the setting and know when to tidy up or wash hands ready for lunch. They use resources and observe posters which reflect a range of beliefs and cultures. Children in the sessional nursery have regular use of the computer and become skilled in using the mouse and arrow keys. The day nursery children have occasional use of the computer.

Children enjoy many innovative, creative experiences. They create numerous paintings and pictures from chalk choosing their paper and colours. They also paint with water in the outside area, watching the marks disappear in the sun. Children relish the many opportunities for imaginative play and develop intricate scenarios with the equipment supplied. They use equipment throughout the nurseries as imaginative play items. Children in the day nursery make sculptures from foil. They squash and shape the foil into hat and flower shapes, proudly showing their creations to staff. Children and staff take many incidental opportunities to make music and sing together such as when reading the book about "Ten in the Bed" or marching around with drums.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are highly valued and their individual needs well met. Very good relationships are formed with staff. Staff work closely with parents to ensure children's needs are met. An excellent range of equipment which reflects diversity is available to children at all times. The setting is decorated with numerous posters showing positive images of children with disabilities as well as those from cultures all around the world. Children with special needs and English as an additional language are also welcomed and included in the setting. Spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered.

Children with special needs are very well supported and the wide range of resources as well as the physical environment ensure they are helped to meet their individual goals. Practitioners ensure children with special needs have the resources and equipment they need, for example, a child has a personally labelled box containing key items which he particularly likes. When he is upset his one-to-one worker helps him to feel comfortable by looking at the box with him and investigating the contents.

The sensory room in the sessional nursery provides a stimulating area for children, with a number of new experiences, and acts as a distraction to those who are upset. Resources such as musical instruments that can be worn on wrists and easy grip puzzles allow children with physical disabilities to join in all activities. Activities are adapted as needed, for example, whilst children are marble painting, a child with learning difficulties and speech delay joins in at the table and is permitted to explore the paint in the tray with her fingers. She is then taken to find her name sticker to label her work. She is developing independence as she then places her painting on the drying rack and washes her hands. Children attend the setting with a variety of needs including medical, emotional, learning and physical. Practitioners maintain good, clear records of children, discussions and agreements with parents, information from other professionals working with the families and plans of how the setting intends to support the child. Staff work closely with special needs co-ordinators and support teachers to help all children progress.

Children's good behaviour is promoted by staff who praise them at every opportunity. Staff act as good role models. They are calm, polite and positive in their approach. They are skilled in dealing with incidents and events of unwanted behaviour whilst being positive. In the sessional nursery children learn to think and to consider others, for example, a child finds boots for another to wear so that she is safe on the wooden path. Children learn to take turns by using a sand timer when taking part in computer and woodwork activities. In the day nursery staff quickly distract younger children who become upset when their parents leave. They are interested and engaged in other activities by kind and consistent staff.

Partnership with parents is good. Relationships between staff and parents are warm and friendly and staff in both the day and sessional nurseries make home visits before children start in the setting. This procedure enables staff to build positive, professional relationships with both parents and the children. Settling in procedures are in place and parents are welcomed into the setting. The staff communicate effectively with parents in a variety of ways recognising differing needs, cultures and work patterns. Written communication is clear, informative and easy to read. Parents are well informed about routines, activities and receive excellent information about the Foundation Stage. There are effective channels of communication to enable discussion about children's progress in both the day nursery and the sessional nursery. Planned, regular meetings are held for staff and parents. The setting values parents observations and works with them to plan the next steps of children's learning. Parents are involved in the setting, helping with fundraising, attending workshops, being in sessions and taking part in surveys. Parents are kept well informed about the policies and procedures, topics and activities provided, through the children's record of achievements, regular newsletters and information boards. There is a complaints procedure in place although no complaints log has been prepared. Parents speak positively and knowingly about the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the good deployment of knowledgeable and experienced staff.

Children are always supervised by staff who have appropriate checks and good staff ratios are maintained at all times. All staff have job descriptions and a clear understanding of what is expected of them. They receive annual appraisals.

Children's needs are supported by a team of staff who work well together. They move around the rooms where they are employed and provide a high standard of care for all children. Space is well organised in both the inside and outdoor environments. Children are encouraged to move around and choose their own activities. Detailed policies and procedures are implemented effectively to successfully promote children's care and wellbeing. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good. Staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage and are experienced in working with pre-school aged children. Management use discussions and regular meetings with key workers to monitor the curriculum and the impact of children's individual progress. Staff discuss how sessions contribute to children's learning and make formal evaluations of children's development. Managers evaluate sessions and assess staff practice through regular observations. Together they are effective in providing and promoting an inclusive environment. The setting is committed to improving care and education for all the children. They do this by having a high expectation of children and staff. They work closely with the whole family where possible. Management and staff are active in keeping up-to-date with current regulations, guidance and teaching methods. This includes strategies for supporting children, their families and those with special needs.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the pre-school was asked to ensure all accident records were signed by parents. The policy for non-collection of children had to be expanded to include a procedure for uncollected children, and signed records of medication administered to children were to be held. This has now been completed in the sessional nursery although accident records are not always signed promptly in the day nursery and this remains a recommendation.

At the last education inspection, staff were asked to ensure they use the daily routines and everyday play activities to increase children's awareness of the sounds of letters, of writing for different purposes and to encourage them to use numbers to solve simple problems. They were required to develop consistent planning and assessment systems for the Foundation Stage to ensure that all children receive the same learning opportunities and that all aspects of communication, language and literacy and mathematical development receive sufficient attention. Also, to ensure that all parents are equally informed about the Foundation Stage and their child's progress towards the early learning goals and use the monitoring system to evaluate the quality of the funded nursery education.

Parents are well informed about the Foundation Stage and further plans to keep parents up-to-date are in place. The monitoring system is used to evaluate the quality of nursery education and continually develop the curriculum. Staff use incidental opportunities as well as planned activities to increase children's awareness of writing

for different purposes, and in the sessional nursery children use numbers to solve simple problems. Consistent planning and assessment systems are not yet in use and children's learning opportunities vary in the sessional and day nurseries.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 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 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 children in sleep room are checked regularly throughout the day
- ensure a member of staff in each section of the centre holds a current paediatric first aid training certificate and accident records are signed by parents
- prepare a log to record any complaints from parents

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):

- develop consistent planning and assessment systems for the Foundation Stage to ensure that all children receive the same learning opportunities

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website:

