



# Sunflower Seed Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY257620
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jean Suff
<b>Setting Address</b>	Northborough School, Church Street, Northborough, Peterborough, PE6 9BN
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<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Sunflower Seed Pre School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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](http://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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sunflower Seed Pre-School opened in 1980. It operates from a mobile classroom in the grounds of Northborough Primary School, situated in the village of Northborough, to the north of Peterborough. The group has the use of two classrooms within the mobile, plus a kitchen, entrance area and toilet facilities. There is also an enclosed outdoor play area. The Pre-School serves the local area.

There are currently 32 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 15 funded 3 year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. They are able to support children with special needs. No children currently attend who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term-times. Sessions are from 09:30 until 13:00hrs on Mondays and Tuesdays, and from 09:30 until 15:00hrs, Wednesday to Friday. Some children attend either morning or afternoon sessions on the latter 3 days.

The setting employs eight staff, all of whom work part-time. All the staff, except for one, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The staff member who does not is about to embark on a level 2 qualification. The setting receives the support of a teacher from the Peterborough Sure Start Strategic Partnership (SSSP).

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a suitably hygienic environment. They develop their personal hygiene skills through daily routines and relevant topics and therefore minimise the risk of cross-infection. For example, children wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating and they learn about healthy lifestyles. Staff act as good role models as they wash their own hands and clean tables using antibacterial spray to reduce cross-contamination.

The setting has a broad range of policies and procedures that promote children's good health. For example, children receive medication in discussion with parents, written permission is obtained and proper records are kept. Sufficient staff have attended relevant first aid training and a suitably equipped first aid box is readily available. Therefore, staff are able to respond positively should a child have an accident or become unwell whilst at the pre-school. Accident records are maintained and are signed by parents. Appropriate information is shared with parents to help monitor and support children's well-being.

Children sit together in a welcoming social environment to have food and drink at set times and are encouraged to drink extra water after exercise so that they stay well hydrated and comfortable. They eat healthy snacks, such as cucumber, apple and cheese and drink milk or water. Staff actively promote healthy eating, for example, for children's packed lunches the setting has a 'no sweets' policy. Children eat their sandwich and fruit first, only eating their biscuit if they are still hungry. Therefore, they make healthy choices. Children gain awareness of what is beneficial to eat as staff engage them in activities that promote healthy eating and provide opportunities to explore different tastes and textures such as a range of fruits.

Children participate in physical activities on a daily basis, although time spent outdoors is limited, which reduces children's opportunity to play in the fresh air. Children enjoy riding wheeled vehicles, pushing prams and enacting role-play in the outside play-house. They run, skip, balance on large bricks and learn how to jump and land on mats so develop their co-ordination and large muscle skills. Children also take part in occasional movement sessions. However, at present large physical activities are not planned to offer suitable challenge for older and more able children to extend their skills. Children learn to effectively use tools and equipment that help to develop small muscle skills and their hand and eye co-ordination. For example, they use scissors, glue spreaders, rolling pins, cutters and fastenings on dolls clothes.

Staff sensitively supervise children and offer younger children extra help and guidance so they achieve and make progress.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children have ample space to play safely. They confidently move around the indoor area and make choices from well-labelled and accessible resources. Rooms are bright, airy and colourful so the setting is welcoming to children, parents and carers.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised by vigilant staff supervision and safe practice. For example, excellent adult to child ratios are maintained and children's safe arrival and departure carefully monitored. The premises are kept secure and regular risk assessments are carried out to address any potential hazard to children's safety. Children have a developing sense of keeping safe. For example, staff involve children in fire drills and talk with them positively about the careful use of play equipment. Children know to walk and not run inside, so that they do not trip and hurt themselves or others.

Children are protected because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Staff are well aware of signs and symptoms of abuse and are familiar with the local child protection guidelines for protecting children. The pre-school has a written child protection policy which is made readily available to parents at the time they place a child at the setting. Therefore, children's welfare is safeguarded.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children who attend the pre-school are happy and settle well. They are warmly welcomed by staff on arrival and quickly engage with each other at circle time. Children involve themselves purposefully in a range of activities, such as model making and role-play. Younger children settle readily because staff are sensitive and supportive of their emotional needs. This helps them to feel secure and provides a suitable environment for them to increase their confidence and independence. Initial observations and assessments are made to establish children's starting points and developmental needs. There is a good balance of planned and child initiated activities that encourage children to learn and progress. However, these are primarily planned for the Foundation Stage as the setting does not as yet have regard for the 'Birth to three matters' framework when planning for children under three.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff demonstrate a working knowledge of the Foundation Stage and a sound understanding of how children learn through play and practical activities. They are enthusiastic and provide opportunities for children to be active learners. Planning is in place for some of the six areas of learning and plans build on what children know and can do and show differentiation for children. However, plans do not ensure that all aspects of learning, such as knowledge and understanding of the world and physical

development are adequately covered. Basic observations and assessments are made of children's level of development and are used to match activities to the next stage in children's learning.

Staff are friendly and show real enjoyment and interest in their dealings with children, so helping them feel settled and secure. Staff work directly with children for much of the time and actively encourage children's purposeful play and continued focus on activities. Staff manage children's behaviour very well, using positive strategies and clear explanations. Staff organise the pre-school to encourage children to make independent choices although insufficient use is made of the outside play area. They regularly use aspects of mathematics and literacy during routine activities to consolidate children's learning, for example, children recognise their name label at snack time and talk about the date and the weather.

Children have positive relationships with adults and peers. They behave very well and understand what is expected of them and how their behaviour affects others. Children show good levels of concentration and interact co-operatively in group activities, they take turns, share and respond positively to praise and encouragement. They are beginning to learn independence but some opportunities to develop manipulative and self-care skills are missed. For example, children do not set their own place, prepare fruit or cut cheese at snack-time as adults prepare and serve directly onto their plate, therefore children do not have the opportunity to develop these life skills.

Children listen to adults and each other attentively and enjoy listening to well-known stories. They initiate conversations and speak confidently to each other. Most children recognise their name labels which they place on the table at snack-time. Children are developing knowledge of sounds as they hear and recognise the 't' for Tuesday when they sing their days of the week song. Opportunities are created for children to engage in mark making, for example, they use pencils, crayons, paint and water and some children are able to write their own name using recognisable letters. However, children do not have consistent access to mark making equipment outside and staff do not always encourage children to write for a purpose during activities and role-play, which limits learning.

Children use mathematical language in everyday activities as they talk about the containers in the water holding more. They use positional language as they build a train track and move the trains along and under the bridge. Children reliably count up to ten and beyond and use larger numbers in their play as they take temperatures. They learn to sort as they tidy up, putting different types of food in different boxes. However, there are missed opportunities to introduce problem solving and simple calculations in routine and spontaneous activities.

Children are beginning to be introduced to information and technology through the use of calculators and disposable cameras. They develop a sense of history by looking at old toys and imagining how their parents played with them. They express their creativity as they explore a range of media and art materials such as marbling, painting and collage. Children use their imagination in small world play as they re-create experiences from home and their life. They enjoy singing familiar songs from memory sometimes accompanied by actions, showing delight and gaining confidence in their abilities.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the pre-school with friendly greetings and quickly settle into the group showing confidence and interest in what each other have to say. Resources around the room reflect diversity therefore support children in gaining a positive image of themselves and others. The celebration of various festivals such as Pancake Day and visits to the primary school are beginning to give children a wider view of the world in which they live and help develop a sense of belonging to their local community. Children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties integrate well because staff have a competent understanding of children's individual needs. Staff present and adapt activities to ensure all children are fully included in the life of the setting.

Children behave very well and are co-operative because staff manage their behaviour in positive ways. Children know what is expected of them at pre-school as they are given clear explanations and affirmation of good behaviour. Staff help children learn to negotiate and resolve conflicts by using age appropriate language. Children like to show staff their work and achievements and are pleased when staff praise them with a 'well done' for their counting. As a result children's self-esteem and confidence is enhanced. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are welcomed into the setting and children settle well because staff are sensitive to their emotional needs and help them to feel secure and become confident. Parents receive regular information about pre-school activities on a board. Children benefit as key workers share information informally with parents on a daily basis so that children's individual needs can be met. The pre-school provides a range of written information for parents although only very basic information on the Foundation Stage. Regular meetings are organised with parents to discuss children's progress and achievements. However, these do not necessarily cover all areas of learning or allow parents to contribute to assessments. This inhibits parents from being fully involved and influencing their child's learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall children's needs are met. Children benefit from sound organisation of space and resources. The pre-school is supported by a management committee who assist with fundraising and help to maintain appropriate standards of care and education. However, the setting has not yet established systems to methodically revise the pre-schools documents, policies and procedures. All adults who come into contact with children are appropriately vetted to ensure their suitability and staff have a range of childcare experience and early years qualifications. Staff are attentive and deployed well to support the care of children. A key worker system is in place therefore children and parents build trusting relationships with consistent staff who are mainly responsible for individual children's welfare. High adult to child ratios provide children with regular small group and one-to-one attention.

Children fully use all areas of the pre-school and become engrossed in their chosen activities. Clearly designated areas are arranged to allow for various types of play. For example, circle

time, role-play, quiet reading and 'messy' activities. Children's care, learning and play is generally well promoted because staff ensure children have sufficient time to play, extend activities, be active and relax.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. The staff have regular opportunities to meet as a team to discuss planning of activities. Staff have a clear vision and aim for all children to be happy, confident, make progress and have a seamless transition to school. Informal staff appraisals are conducted, they are aware of their own strengths and weaknesses and identify their training needs appropriately. Nevertheless, insufficient staff who work with funded children have received the necessary training so that they fully understand the Foundation Stage curriculum. They are not fully aware of all areas of learning and how activities contribute to children's progress. As a result, opportunities to extend children's learning are missed.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to remove certain hazards to children and to present an inviting and interesting book area. Both these recommendations have been met therefore children's safety is now protected and learning opportunities have increased.

At the last Nursery Education inspection the setting was given three recommendations. Firstly they were asked to introduce an appraisal scheme to help monitor and develop the quality of the educational provision offered. This has now been done, staff are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and identify their own training needs. Secondly the setting was asked to implement the proposed consultation sessions to provide parents with information on their children's progress towards the early learning goals. Parents now have regular opportunities to meet with their child's key worker although are not always given full information about their children's progress in all areas of learning. A further recommendation has therefore been raised. Lastly the setting was asked to review the use of large group activities to extend and improve children's listening and concentration skills. Staff have reviewed and improved their teaching methods therefore children learn more effectively.

### **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 maintains 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 satisfactory.

### 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):

- improve outcomes for children under three by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

#### 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):

- ensure balanced coverage of the six areas of learning within the Foundation Stage
- develop methods to provide parents of funded nursery education children with clear information about the Foundation Stage and their children's ongoing progress
- develop staff knowledge and understanding of the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage'.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)