

Park Avenue Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	220038
Inspection date	04 July 2007
Inspector	Rosemary Moore
Setting Address	20 Park Avenue, Kettering, Northants, NN16 9RU
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Registered person	Jane Rosalind Scott
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

Park Avenue Nursery School registered in 1992. It operates from the ground floor of the proprietors own Victorian home in Park Avenue, Kettering, Northamptonshire. The nursery consists of four rooms, a separate kitchen and toilet area. Children have access to the garden for outdoor play. The nursery offers a service to families from the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 52 children on roll, of whom 35 are in receipt of funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery opens five days a week from 08:00 -17:30, throughout the year, except for Bank Holidays and Christmas week.

There are currently five members of staff, who work with the children and all have appropriate early years qualifications. The proprietor is a qualified practitioner and she manages the provision overall and also employs a cook. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted and hygiene standards are well maintained. They are cared for on premises where daily hygiene routines effectively prevent the spread of infection and good procedures minimise the risk of cross-contamination. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating, wipe their face and clean their teeth after meals to keep them clean and healthy. Children understand this routine well and carry it out with support as required.

Children receive good quality care and attention in the event of any illness or accidents because staff members hold up to date first aid qualifications. Accidents are recorded and signed by the parent or person collecting the child. Appropriate procedures and consent are in place for the administration of medication and children do not attend if they are unwell.

Children are well nourished because they are offered a good, healthy, balanced diet. Information is gathered from parents to identify any special dietary needs and meet individual requirements, with a menu being made available daily. Children are offered hot meals by a cook who attends daily to freshly prepare breakfast, dinner and tea. These meals include a variety of fresh organic fruit and vegetables, which promotes children's healthy growth and development. Children also grow and handle fresh fruit and vegetables to help them to understand about healthy living. Children sit together in small groups, quietly for lunch to encourage them to eat well. They have good table manners and are well-behaved at meal times, waiting for everyone to finish before they use the bathroom in turn. However, water is not available to children at all times to help keep them hydrated, especially during physical activities.

Children benefit from daily fresh air and exercise which helps them to develop their physical strength. They use a free flow system to access an outdoor area where they are able to make their own choices for play. Children show they enjoy playing in this area, by spending the majority of the time outside where they are developing their physical skills as they interact with each other and staff. Challenge for older or more able children is especially noticeable in these physical activities. For example, a good range of activities are set out in the outdoor area which encourage children to build on their skills and strength. They skilfully roll and catch hoops, ride bikes with pedals in the designated area, negotiating obstacles. Children also practise running, hopping and balancing bean bags on their head whilst joining in the 'Sports day' fun races in the park. This activity provides lots of enjoyment for the children and includes appropriate races for varying ages and abilities. All children are rewarded with a sticker to acknowledge their achievements, in which they show great delight.

A good range of activities are available outside in all weathers, with children protected from the elements, due to the facility of a covered area. For example, they can access sand, water, creative activities and construction blocks. Children are able to sleep or play quietly and relax after lunch during a rest time, as well as at other times if required, to suit their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment which displays a variety of their creative work. The main playroom is organised into areas for children to participate in various activities, and leads into the garden. Another room provides children with an appropriate area for several

activities, including imaginative play, quiet times or adult led activities. Children are given choices in their play, both inside and in the garden with some further resources available to select independently if they wish.

Children are safe on the premises because staff have a good awareness of security, ensuring they cannot leave the premises unsupervised and there can be no unauthorised access to visitors. There are clear procedures to ensure children are collected only by authorised people. Children and staff are fully aware of the fire procedures on the premises to keep children safe in the event of a fire. Checks are carried out daily to ensure that the premises and equipment are safe and suitable for children to use. However, the procedures for assessing the risks for outings, especially to the local park are not recorded or sufficiently planned to be fully effective in supporting the children's safety. Children learn about road safety, they know the procedure for crossing the road and staff regularly practise this with them.

Children are well protected from harm because staff members have a good understanding of their role in child protection, most having updated this training within the past year. They are aware of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse and know how to follow the appropriate procedures and the local authority guidelines, should they have concerns about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children learn well through play because activities encourage them to use a variety of different mediums to explore and experiment in a fun and exciting way. For example, children have a wonderful time with their hands in the shaving foam on the table top watching each other and developing their ideas creatively as a team and individually. The activity turns into a rhythm session as a child claps his hands and foam flies into the air. Realising it makes a good sound, children start tapping the table with smiles and laughter all around. A member of staff supervises and further develops each child's language as she questions them, for example, to make them think about how the texture feels. This activity was prepared specifically with the younger children in mind, to encourage them to use most of their senses and to be imaginative, linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework for young children. Children use their imaginative ideas as they role play with dolls, cars and construction blocks. Young children begin to develop an understanding that pictures carry meaning as they look at books and listen to a story.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from the effective use of planning for the nursery education. This is because staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation stage and they ensure activities cover all six of the areas learning. Children's progress is observed, recorded and monitored to assess their progress towards the early learning goals. Staff skilfully adapt their level of language and questioning to reflect each child's stage of development. This helps them to extend the learning of all children. For example, younger children freely experiment with wet sand patting, rubbing, digging and making sand castles. Staff ask open questions to make children think and encourage a response. 'How does it feel, how many are there, will it pour?' Children have choices of playing indoors or outdoor with a range of activities, which they enjoy playing with. However, the lunchtime routine impacts upon the children's learning, because staff do not create opportunities for children to use the time effectively. Observation and assessment are appropriately kept, to track the children's progress. These are effectively

used when looking at future planning with certain aims in mind. Children all have individual folders with dated records which are shared with parents.

Children settle quickly and enjoy good, trusting relationships with staff and their friends. Staff get down to the children's level and engage in meaningful conversation and discussion which develops learning through play. Children are learning to join in the conversation at group time, generally they are very vocal, using language well to express themselves. Children enjoy sitting and listen to a story, they clearly show they understand how to use books and that print carries meaning. Children attempt writing and staff provide many activities to develop their mark making skills, with some very able children showing they can clearly and confidently write their own names. Children are using number and shape in daily activities, they count and recognise written number. They are aware when four children are at an activity table, that they need to wait until a space becomes available. Staff do not always encourage children's use of number to problem solve to their full potential, or consolidate and strengthen knowledge and understanding in this area of learning.

Children have lots of opportunities to explore and investigate as they develop their knowledge of the seaside. For example, children play in the sand tray, they fill buckets and make sand castles and count how many they each have. Children grow fruit and vegetables in tubs in the garden, they examine these and proudly explain what they are growing. Children show an interest in the world around them, for example, through making visits to the local park, which builds on their sense of adventure and understanding of the local community. Children develop their own creative and imaginative ideas through the activities provided and because staff interact well with children to further develop creative skills. For example, children create colourful patterns with glue paper and pens.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are all welcome and very settled in the nursery. Their individual needs are generally understood, because they are cared for by a constant staff team who know them well. Children have equal opportunities within the setting, independence is generally encouraged although sometimes limited. For example, by some daily routines, because children do not become involved. Children begin to learn about differences in culture and society through celebrating a variety of festivals throughout the year. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is fully aware of her role to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities within the setting.

Children show respect and generally behave well. They learn what is expected of them through consistent management of behaviour by staff. They play well together, sharing toys and equipment, because effective rules are clearly and positively reinforced and children are reminded of these. For example, staff explain to children why they should not run inside. Children are also learning to take responsibility and think about how their own actions affect themselves and others within the group. For example, children wait patiently for their turn on the bike or at a craft activity. Children are cared for consistently because parents have opportunities to share information about their children, as well as receiving feedback and newsletters. A complaints log is kept and made available to parents if they request to see it. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are fostered. For example, children benefit from the staff's ability to foster and develop respect, because they act as good role models.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Parents report very positively about the setting and explain they are encouraged to share information about the children's

learning both written and verbally. They are involved in some activities held by the nursery. For example, they join the children in the local park to watch the fun in the sports races. Parents are able to attend a parent's evening to discuss the children's progress and transition documents are sent home if children are due to attend school, the following term. Parents are confident in the knowledge that their children are happy and gain valuable learning experiences in preparation for school and the wider world.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the good organisation of the nursery. The registered provider and manager have appropriate qualifications and experience to fully support the staff and children. The team of staff remain fairly constant with appropriate procedures in place for the recruitment of new staff, to ensure that they are suitable to work with the children. Staff members are well motivated and systems are in place to identify areas for development. For example, some staff members have recently received training in managing behaviour and child protection. Regular staff meetings support the effectiveness of the provision and this promotes continuity of care for children.

Children are well supported because of the good staffing levels. This enables staff to work closely with the children throughout the day. Daily routines are followed which the children are familiar with and this gives children a sense of time and a feeling of belonging. Policies and procedures are generally in place, which the manager shares with staff and these contribute to the safety and welfare of the children.

Leadership and management are good. The manager supports the staff well in their individual roles within the setting which creates a strong team for the benefit of the children. Staff training and development needs are appropriately assessed and monitored along with the delivery of nursery education within the setting. Changes are currently being implemented to reduce the impact of the daily routine on some of the children's choice in their activities. For example, an effective system is now in place, to allow children free-flow access to the outside area where they can explore and play as they wish. However, some of the children continue to be seated together for a long period of time at lunchtime. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the manager was asked to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection and equal opportunities. Also for opportunities for children to choose resources, develop their own creative ideas, to operate more independently and for children to recognise and use numbers in everyday situations. These have now been addressed through, planning of activities to improve use of number, to include organisation of the daily routine to develop a freeflow system for children to access outdoor activities. Staff have attended training courses in child protection and equal opportunities to support the learning, care and welfare of the children in the setting. Although the organisation of time, especially during the lunchtime routine, has been raised at this inspection.

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 upon request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- make fresh drinking water available to children at all times
- record the operational procedures for the safe conduct of any outings

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):

- improve the organisation of lunchtime to create more learning opportunities for children, and to develop their independence (also applies to care)

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