

# Suffolk School For Parents

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	251627
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 December 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Emily Alderson
<b>Setting Address</b>	6 Perry Barn, Burstall Lane, Sproughton, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP8 3DJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01473 652880
<b>E-mail</b>	office@sstp.org.uk
<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Suffolk School For Parents
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Suffolk School for Parents opened in May 2000. It is an independent charity that provides early education for pre-school children with motor learning difficulties. The school provides a unique and holistic form of early education inspired by methods used at the Peto Andras Institute of Conductive Education in Budapest, Hungary. This form of education is designed to stimulate and awaken the child's senses and encourage self awareness and to develop and improve motor skills.

The setting operates from two large classrooms in a specially converted barn in the village of Sproughton near Ipswich. A maximum of 12 children may attend the setting at any one time but usually sessions cater for no more than six children. The school is open for 38 weeks of the year, term time only. Sessions are from 09:45 until 12:15 on Wednesday and Thursday mornings and 12:45 until 15:15 on Wednesday afternoon. Parents attend with their children.

There are currently 15 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these, nine children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area.

Suffolk School for Parents is primarily for children within Suffolk although occasionally places may be available for children from other areas.

The school employs three staff and three volunteers. Of these, the manager holds a degree in Early Childhood Studies and two members of staff are currently working towards a Level 2 qualification in early years. In addition two members of staff have been specially trained in Conductive Education.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children attend a setting which has good health practices as the staff follow set procedures to ensure that the setting is maintained clean and hygienic. When preparing snack the staff wash their hands, use a chopping board and wash the fruit. Cross-infection is further minimised as children are each given individual flannels and towels during the sessions which are washed after every use. If children need a rest they can do so in the sensory corner using the bean bags and cushions provided. Children learn to understand simple good health and living as staff ensure that children wash their hands after messy activities and before snacks. Staff use attractive bowls and soap making a fun activity out of hand washing. They sing a song as each child washes their hands. The children are very familiar with the routine and patiently wait their turn.

Children receive good care when they are ill or had an accident as some of the staff are trained in first aid and there are first aid boxes situated in each room. Should children have an accident it is recorded in a book and parents are asked to sign to acknowledge the entry. Currently parents and carers stay with their child during the session, and therefore, there would not be an instant where staff would need to administer medicine. If a child becomes ill at the setting the parents or carers are asked to take them home and are informed of the length of time they need to stay at home via the settings policy and information from the communicable diseases chart. The setting has contingencies in place should a parent be unwell with alternative numbers for people they can contact.

Children's physical play experiences are well promoted at the setting. Staff carry out conductive education. This form of education is designed to stimulate and awaken the child's senses and encourage self-awareness and to develop and improve motor skills. They, therefore, incorporate adult-led physical movement into each session focusing on different parts of the body depending on the individual child's needs. Children are using their bodies in a number of ways depending on their abilities. They are set tasks so that small steps can be taken to develop their movement and control. The setting create opportunities for children to balance on benches, throw and catch bean bags, step into and out of hoops and walk on different sized and shaped stepping stones. They also provide the children with pencils, scissors and threading to help develop their hand and eye co-ordination. Staff sing songs throughout the different exercises that take place and mirrors are often used so that children can watch themselves during activities. For example, checking that they position their feet correctly when balancing on the bench. Although children regularly exercise they do not regularly access the outdoors and consequently they are not experiencing fresh air and the opportunity to play and learn outside.

Children have their health and dietary needs well met and increase their understanding of healthy living as the setting provides children with a range of snacks depending on their

individual needs. Children have access to water throughout the session and are offered either milk, juice or water at snack times. Food offered ranges from tuna sandwiches, biscuits, beans on toast and rice pudding amongst others. Menus are displayed on the walls for parents to see. Children's dietary needs are displayed so that all staff members are fully aware. All food provided is according to parents and carers wishes.

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

The provision is good.

The environment is very warm and welcoming for children, staff, parents and carers because it is brightly decorated making it an inviting setting for everyone. The space is very well organised and split into two main rooms which are equally used. One room has a sensory corner, lots of resources with plenty of space for children to play. The other room houses some of the equipment and is used for a number of things such as snack time, mobility and a range of activities. In addition, the setting has toilets, an office and a small kitchen area. The equipment is stored in a variety of places using shelving, low storage cabinets and cupboards. The staff pay attention to cleanliness and as a result the setting is very clean and tidy allowing plenty of space for children to safely use the rooms and equipment provided. Staff deploy themselves very well to cater for the children they care for giving them all individual attention when needed.

Children use very safe suitable toys and equipment as the setting regularly check their equipment as part of their weekly risk assessment to ensure that it is safe and suitable for them to use. The setting have lots of specialist equipment to cater for the varying needs of the children. The equipment includes plinths, different size chairs and small benches which can be adjusted to different heights and sizes to suit every child. Staff make a note of the different size equipment each child uses so that they can set up the equipment in advance ready for the session. Children use a wide range of resources including books, musical instruments, balls, a fully equipped sensory corner amongst many others. The toys are washed after each session to ensure that they are clean and ready for the next group.

The settings arrangements meet health and safety guidelines because staff assess the hazards and minimise the risks. The weekly risk assessments carried out check the building and the resources. In addition to the weekly risk assessments staff carry out visual checks as they arrive in the morning to ensure that the setting is safe and ready for the children. For example, checking that the fire escapes are clear and that the plug sockets are covered. Stair gates are used so that children do not access the entrance, office and kitchen area. The staff manage who enters the setting as they have a good system in place. On arrival parents knock on the door and are always greeted by a member of staff. Visitors ring the bell and wait for a member of staff to grant them entry. Children are learning to keep themselves safe through discussion with the staff, for example, how to safely use scissors.

Children are well protected from fire as the setting have a well-thought-out evacuation procedure. Staff carry out regular fire drills so that both staff and children become familiar with the routine. Each drill is logged and comments noted so that future improvements can be made. The setting take precautions by having smoke alarms and fire extinguishers fitted in each room and a fire blanket readily available in the kitchen. Children are very safe on outings because the parents are required to accompany their children to ensure that there is a high adult to child ratio. Children are protected because staff understand their role in child protection. Most staff have accessed training and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Parents are informed of the staffs' duties via the setting's policy.

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

The provision is good.

Children excitedly enter the provision they are greeted by enthusiastic staff who welcome both the children, parents and carers into the setting. The walls are brightly decorated with children's art work and photographs of the children participating in activities making it a very inviting setting. Staff help the children try new activities by role modelling the activity, being involved and showing the children encourages them to have a turn. The activities on offer are varied and interesting. Staff make them short and often change them to maintain the children's interests so that they can actively continue to learn. Children are involved in musical activities, arts and crafts, listening to stories and lots of mobility exercises. The setting's fully equipped sensory corner has a range of different coloured lights and comfortable beanbags for them to sit on so that they can explore their surroundings. Children are split into sessions and are grouped according to their abilities not their age. This enables staff to plan broad activities which they know suit the needs of the children as well as designing individual plans. Activities are provided both in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage depending on where the child is in their development not on their age.

### **The Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Planning begins with the child and staff plan activities to cater for each child at the setting. The long term planning identifies the themes and the medium breaks the themes into activity ideas. Children's starting points are known through the initial assessment which is completed by staff, parents and carers. This information allows the staff to plan activities to suit their abilities and staff also observe the children. Each child has their own short term plan individually designed to help them progress and to provide each child with appropriate learning opportunities. The plan has the child in the centre with the six areas of learning or if using the 'Birth to three matters' framework the four areas. Under each area the child has their learning goals which are linked to the stepping stones but simplified to suit the abilities of the children. The staff produce session plans which are split into two, one side shows step by step instructions of the sessions activities. The other side identifies the aim of the activity linked to the stepping stones and each individual child's learning goal. It also shows the aims for the parents and carers and home application so that they can continue the activity or exercise at home. The staff are very organised and plan their session well. Each session has a folder containing relevant information for the staff about the session. The activities are broken down showing what the staff, parent and carers need to do to support the child during activities. However, as each session is very structured it leaves little time for children to initiate activities using resources of interest to them.

Staff carry out effective evaluations and observations. During the activities staff write observations on each of the children. Each session is evaluated by staff, parents and carers. Furthermore staff evaluate the planned activity to see whether the child met their goal, how they did and what the next steps are for the child. All the information gathered is used to plan the following weeks activities. Staff monitor children's learning, when they achieve a stepping stone or learning goal, their short term plan it is dated and forms part of the child's records. At the end of each term, staff look at all the evaluations sheets and produce an annual report showing how each child is progressing under each of the areas of learning and what their goals are for the next term. These are shared with parents who are encouraged to add comments. The staff are committed to children's learning and their teaching styles are constantly adapted to deliver activities to children with different needs. Staff use very effective methods to motivate

each child. They use lots of facial expressions, close contact and lots of praise and encouragement. They also use lots of questioning to challenge the children using open ended questions to encourage them to think about their responses.

The children are actively making progress in their learning compared to their starting points. Children are motivated to learn and participate in activities for quite some time, showing that they are able to concentrate. Some of the activities are carried out individually with each child and so the other children patiently watch their peers whilst waiting for turn. For example, during hand washing, children wait for the bowl, water and soap so that they can wash their hands. Children are developing their self-esteem as they make some choices during, for example, snack time, where they are able to choose what they would like to drink and which cup would like to drink from. Children communicate in a number of ways some use eye-contact or slight movements and others verbalise using words. Some children talk about the how different things feel with one child saying 'the bean bag is lumpy'. Activities such as registration help the children to link sound to letters as each child's first letter is sounded before their name is called. Children enjoy looking at books and enjoy joining in with stories either by pointing at the pictures or saying what they can see. Staff make sure during story times that the book is passed to each child so that they can all look at the pictures and feel any props bring used. The children have opportunities to mark-make using pencils and crayons.

Children are encouraged to count and are often singing songs that involve counting. Some children freely use mathematical language to compare objects using words such as big and little, for example, when playing with the different size and coloured bears. Children are provided with many opportunities to use their senses exploring and investigating different textures. A fun and much enjoyed activity is melted chocolate tasting, smelling and touching it. The children are each provided with a tray of melted chocolate they begin by feeling it rubbing their hands together and very shortly discover the taste. Children are involved in creative activities using a range of resources to make paintings and pictures. Some children recognise different colours and are able to choose their favourites during activities and snack time. The setting use lots of music during the sessions using different musical instruments and encouraging the children to sing along with familiar songs.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are exceptionally included and their differences acknowledged because all children are given the opportunity to share their experiences. Staff unquestionably enjoy working with the children, it is evident in their enthusiasm toward each child. As the parents stay with the children it gives staff an excellent opportunity to work with each child individually giving them their full attention during parts of the sessions. This enables the children to receive one-to-one care tailored to suit their specific needs. Staff are exceptionally good at making the children feel at home in the setting and enthusiastically welcome both the child and the parents and carers. The setting provides children with many purposeful activities which focus on one child at a time. Routine activities help the children to feel very special, for instance, the morning welcome. Children each have a name card which they post into the letter box to self-register, whilst the other children, parents, carers and staff sing them a welcome song. They are encouraged to say 'hello' and if unable to verbalise the staff have a computerised pad which the child can press to aid them. This activity helps the children to feel very special, which is clear as their faces light up when it is their turn. Staff use their expert knowledge to specifically select each piece of equipment to suit each child's height, size and need it is labelled with their name card so that they know that it is theirs for the session. All of which help children feel a

sense of belonging. The children's art work is displayed on the walls for everyone to see as well as many photographs. This increases the children's self-esteem as they see their achievements proudly displayed and shows them that they are highly valued. The setting have outstanding resources to support every child's learning to provide fun exciting activities. The children are in touch with the local community and have had many visitors into the setting to further add to their learning. They include the fire brigade, police and a farmer on a tractor. They were given the opportunity to have a turn in the vehicles and there are many photographs in the setting reflecting their experiences. Staff discuss diversity with the children and help them to feel very special, they teach the children to accept differences and feel proud to be themselves. The resources positively reflect diversity.

Children's individual needs are excellently met as staff take the time to get to know each child so that they can meet their needs. All staff have a vast and extensive knowledge and understanding of learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Their experience is evident as they work with the children, fully focussing on each child's abilities providing them with exercises and activities suited to them so that they can progress. Some of the children attending the setting have very complex needs using the parents information and the staffs knowledge individual plans are put in place to enable each child to achieve and work towards set goals. All staff are incredibly enthusiastic about their work and it is visible in the amount of effort put into the planning of each session. Staff have accessed an extensive range of training, for example, 'Makaton' to enable them to sign to the children and conductive training to enable them to provide suitable mobility classes and exercises for each child. Staff have learnt different strategies to deal with different children and use them to get the best out of the activities provided. The setting work very closely with other agencies sharing useful information with them. The staff welcome any support and advice that would better equip them to offer the best care to the children who attend.

Children understand appropriate behaviour as the atmosphere within the setting is extremely calm with all the children very happily engaged. Staff recognise good behaviour with continuous praise offered every time a child achieves a goal or takes a step towards it. Positive strategies are used to talk to the children to explain behaviour. Staff effectively adapt their approach depending on the child and always get their full attention prior to talking to them. Children are cared for by staff who work extremely well with parents and carers to meet their individual needs and ensure that the child is always fully included in the setting. Parents and carers receive an excellent welcome pack which gives them very clear and useful information about the setting and what it provides. They are asked to complete the forms in order to give the staff vital information about their child. The notice board is invitingly laid out giving them further information about the setting, routines, services offered by other professionals, training opportunities amongst other useful information. Parents, carers and the children are at the heart of the setting and are involved as soon as their child begins. Staff have formed excellent relationships with them which is evident with how comfortable both parties are when together. The equipment at the setting can be loaned out to families during the holidays, making full use of the resources and helping children at home. Parents and carers are informed of how to make a complaint through the outstandingly clear written policy.

Partnership with Parents and carers is outstanding. Parents and carers are provided with excellent quality information about the setting and the nursery education. They are encouraged to share what they know about their child through the initial assessment completed by the staff. The assessment looks at all areas of the child including their mobility, description of difficulties and diagnosis, general health, professionals involved, impairments and medication. This information enables the staff to expertly plan a programme of education to meet their individual needs in

consultation with parents and carers. A copy of their child's plan is given to them every term so that they know what the aims are. In addition the session goals and their child's individual learning goal is shared with them so that they are very clear on the focus of the session. During the sessions staff work alongside the parents and carers providing them with extra support and valuable guidance and together provide the care and education needed for each child. Staff are very committed to working in partnership with parents and carers and at the end of each session they are fully involved in evaluating their child's day. This allows both parties to state how they felt the session went, whether activities suited their child and any improvements that can be made. Their input is included on the written evaluation and used to inform planning. Staff creatively attach a photograph of the activity to the evaluation sheet which are stored accessible to parents and carers in the child's individual folders. In addition to the daily chats and sharing of daily plans parents and carers are invited to meet with staff to discuss their child's achievements. Together they look at the annual report and contribute by suggesting areas for development and possible future goals.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children are developing their self-esteem, have formed positive relationships with staff and children, children behave well and are developing an awareness of diversity.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are very safe as they are cared for by individuals who have been vetted and are cared for by staff with a knowledge and understanding of child development. Children are safe as there are robust procedures in place when recruiting staff to ensure that they are suitable to work in the setting. Staff are cared for by staff with a wealth of experience and who have undertaken a variety of training. The manager holds a degree in early childhood studies and the other two members of staff are currently working towards a Level 2 qualification in early years. Staff are trained in first aid, food hygiene, safeguarding children, manual handling and conductive training amongst others. Staff are continuously accessing training to improve their knowledge.

Children are very well looked after as the setting has a very clear understanding of the National Standards and their responsibility to comply. Staff deploy themselves very well always ensuring that ratios are maintained and that each child receives individual attention throughout the session. The staff work very well as a team, communicating throughout the session sharing ideas and tasks. Children's well-being is promoted by the well-organised records and policies. A daily register is maintained recording the times of arrival and departure. The setting has an operational plan in place providing the reader with a very useful insight into the setting. The settings policies and procedures are clearly written and are reflected in practice. Parents are asked to give the setting information about their child through completing a registration form and other paperwork. These documents are stored accessibly and confidentially on the premises. Overall children's needs are met.

The leadership and management is good. The setting is well led and staff are fully supported in their role. They are inducted in the setting, they have clear job descriptions and are involved in annual appraisals. The appraisal system is a two-way system of communication. Both the staff member and the manager completes a form where they grade different areas of the work. The forms are then discussed and any areas of improvement are identified and an action plan drawn up. The office manager is responsible for ensuring that the members of staff are kept up-to-date with mandatory training and does so by using a table where dates are noted to act

as a reminder. Any training completed is shared with the rest of the team so that good practice can be shared. The daily team meetings are very productive and a useful time to share ideas, plan and evaluate the provision offered. Informal discussion increase the teams effectiveness as they are constantly reviewing and evaluating making changes wherever necessary to provide a better provision to the children. All staff have a very good understanding of how children learn and understand their roles in developing children's learning. The setting have created strong links with other agencies such as the health service, occupational therapists and schools.

The setting is committed to improving care and education are constantly reviewing their practice in a number of ways. These include feedback from parents and carers either on a daily basis or through questionnaires and regular feedback from staff. The setting is very good at assessing its strengths and areas of improvement and do so when completing the self-evaluation form. All staff are fully involved in completing the form as are the committee and therefore everyone's views are valued and encompassed to make improvements.

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

At the last nursery education inspection the setting agreed to create opportunity to make reference to shape and to mark-make. The setting now include mark making regularly as part of activities and shapes are regularly introduced. In addition shapes is one of the terms themes and therefore many activities are planned to support the theme.

At the last care inspection the setting agreed to ensure that the child protection policy contains a statement regarding the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer. The policy has been updated and includes the information required.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **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):

- provide learning and play opportunities outside.

## **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 that planning includes a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities.

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)