

# Sparklers Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY355202
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 April 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Janette Elizabeth Owen
<b>Setting Address</b>	St Mary's Church, Grandstand Road, Herefordshire, HR4 9NE
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<b>Registered person</b>	G&J Tate
<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 satisfactory. 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?

Sparklers Nursery was registered in 2007. It operates from St Mary's Church in the city of Hereford. A maximum of 20 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open on Mondays and Thursdays between 09.30 and 15.00 and all other weekdays between 12.30 and 15.00 during term times. Children have access to a secure outside play area.

There are currently 26 children aged from two years to under eight years on roll. Of these 13 children receive funding for early education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs four staff supported by a volunteer. Of these three staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted satisfactorily because the nursery staff take positive steps to promote children's good health, and encourage them to begin to take responsibility for their own health and hygiene. Positive steps are taken to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures taken when children are ill so that health needs are met. Staff are aware that children should not share drinking bottles, that children understand and follow good hand washing procedures and that nappy changing procedures must be followed in respect of using gloves and aprons. This reduces any risk of cross-infection. Children receive suitable care in the event of an accident because a member of staff trained in first aid is available every session. Records are kept, signed by parents, of any accidents that occur. However, documents used to record details of accidents do not work effectively in a nursery situation, medication records do not clearly show what parents' are signing and admission forms include consent for anti-histamine to be administered which is not in accordance with the National Standards and associated guidance. This potentially compromises children's welfare and does not ensure parents are well informed of procedures followed in event of accidents and the administration of medication.

Children are appropriately nourished and have satisfactory opportunities to learn about healthy eating. Parents provide children with a packed lunch if they stay for lunch. The nursery ensures that children are not hungry or thirsty by providing healthy snacks of fresh or dried fruit and drinks of milk or water. Children able to learn about healthy foods through discussions and activities about healthy lifestyles.

Children are able to be active, to get fresh air and exercise. Regular access to outdoor play provides opportunities for children to develop skills such as pedalling bikes, staff make good use of activities such as parachute games to introduce children to the concepts of colour and numbers. Children are developing their balance and control over their movements as they use apparatus such as climbing frame and slide indoors. Activities are planned into the curriculum to ensure children participate in a varied range of physical activities such as using rolling pins and cutters at the dough table, manipulative toys with buttons to press and turn and writing and painting activities which help them develop their muscle movements and co-ordination. Younger children are developing their independence physically and emotionally. Most children separate from parents happily because staff are supportive and caring offering reassurance until child is settled. Children's physical needs in relation to rest are respected. All children who need to rest or sleep are provided with a quiet area to do so.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are generally well organised with sufficient space for children to move freely around and activities set out in readiness for children. Children can choose from a varied range of good quality resources and activities which cover all areas of development such as role play, nature table, malleable materials, arts and crafts and table games. Displays of children's work add to the welcoming atmosphere of the setting. There are satisfactory arrangements in place to ensure that furniture and equipment are safe and suitable, well-maintained and conform to safety standards. This protects children from harm and helps them stay safe.

Children's safety is promoted because positive steps are taken to promote safety within the setting and satisfactory precautions are taken to prevent accidents. There are good systems in place for ensuring children are safe on the premises, for example, the premises are secure and systems for monitoring access to the setting are effective. Fire safety is promoted satisfactorily. Fire safety equipment is fitted and fire marshal training has been undertaken. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe as they participate in the regular fire drills. Risk assessments and daily checks are used to support staff in identifying any potential hazards. Children are well protected by staff who are vetted and have a sound understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice. They follow child protection procedures in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines in order to protect children from harm.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally well settled and happy, staff are on hand to help settle any child who needs support when they arrive at nursery. Staff demonstrate that they are caring and have concern for the welfare of the children in their care. They ensure children's welfare and emotional needs are addressed by following children's routines, understanding when children are tired or thirsty and by offering comfort when needed. Staff acknowledge children's individuality by getting to know the children and developing a partnership with parents and carers. This helps promote children's confidence and self-esteem.

The manager is well qualified and plans activities which help children make satisfactory developmental progress. Staff demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of 'Birth to three matters' and are working towards full implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage later in the year. All children are able to participate in a range of adult-directed activities and opportunities for free play using the wide range of activities available. For example the children learn about change and the natural world around them. They made insects out of clay, making a variety of different insects using different techniques such as rolling, pinching and moulding to form the insects. Staff had prepared the children for the activity over the week, with opportunities to observe live insects and creatures such as stick insects and tadpoles. Children talked about and shared their experiences of insects and animals at circle time and had drawn pictures of insects such as spiders for wall displays. However, although the range of activities are good and cover all areas of learning they are at times too advanced for the younger children in the group. This results in younger children not benefiting fully from the activities provided. There are good arrangements in place for sharing information on children's progress with parents through regular communication and parents' involvement in children's learning.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The manager of the nursery is well-qualified and has a good understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and is able to plan a varied range of interesting activities to support children's development across all areas of learning. However, the assistants have yet to develop fully their understanding of the Foundation Stage and particularly how to use different teaching methods in order to effectively support children's learning and development. Planning of activities is generally good and ensures all areas of development are covered. The written plans include sufficient detail to support staff in delivering the educational programme. A particular strength is the children's developing knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Topics are well thought out and provide interesting activities such as enabling children to learn about change and the

natural world. They learn about change by observing the life cycle of creatures such as tadpoles and stick insects and watching seeds they have planted grow.

The daily organisation of the nursery includes adult-directed learning and free play where children can explore the good range of activities set out and develop their own learning. Children can access Information and Communication Technology resources at all times. They enjoy using the programmable toys independently. Musical instruments are also readily available enabling children to choose to play with the instruments for their own pleasure finding out what sounds they can make. However, at times some activities are not sufficiently well organised to enable the children to benefit fully from the learning opportunities provided. Children are not well prepared for some activities such as how to make effective use of the role play area when set up as a flower shop. Children move around the activities making independent choices about what they play with and who they want to play with. They are developing their confidence and independence and beginning to form friendships with other children. This helps promote their personal, social and emotional development.

The interaction between the adults present and the children is generally good. Staff encourage children to talk about their experiences and ideas and develop their communication skills as they chat together. They show genuine interest in what the children have to say. However the interaction in activities does not always extend children's learning because opportunities are missed to extend ideas and concepts through practical application. For example, vocabulary and language development is not introduced routinely in activities such as during physical play. Such as, introducing positional or descriptive language when children are climbing, sliding or using wheeled toys. Strategies for managing behaviour are ineffective and impact on the teaching and learning for all children. Either children are not engaged in learning and are disruptive or are having their learning disrupted because of the behaviour of other children. Staff spend considerable time managing behaviour. They do not manage to sustain children interest in some activities and enable them to benefit fully from the learning opportunities offered. Although children are provided with a good range of activities and resources they are not well motivated to learn.

Assessments and observations are carried out to identify the progress children are making towards the early learning goals. Children are making satisfactory progress overall. There is currently no system in place for obtaining information on children's starting points when they enter the nursery. This means that staff are unable to effectively build upon what children already know and understand. Information on children's progress is gathered through observation and made available to parents and carers. This keeps them informed of the progress their child is making.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing sound relationships with adults and other children. There are satisfactory arrangements in place to settle new children into the provision and to obtain information on their care needs from parents on admission. Children are able to develop their sense of belonging and form friendships. Children are beginning to learn about the world around them, to learn about other cultures and beliefs. They celebrate festivals and traditions such as Chinese New Year and St. George's day and are encouraged to give thanks for their food and drink at meal times. These all contribute to the children developing a positive attitude towards diversity and respect for others. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language receive support to enable them to be integrated in to the provision. There is a named person responsible for ensuring the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs is implemented. Parents are consulted about any special services that may be required and there are suitable arrangements in place for seeking additional support and guidance from other professionals involved in the child's care.

Staff are kind and considerate and aim to instil positive codes of behaviour such as respect and consideration for others. However, strategies for managing behaviour are not used effectively to promote the welfare and development of all children. Staff lack the knowledge and experience to manage difficult and challenging behaviour which has an impact on children attending the provision. The daily organisation of some routine tasks such as toileting and preparation of snack times results in less staff being available at these times to help supervise the children.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are welcomed into the nursery and encouraged to be part of their child's learning. They are provided with information on the activities offered each day and are able to contribute items of interest to support the children's learning. They are able to make informed decisions about their child's care because they are provided with information on the provision such as newsletters, information on staffing and the policies and procedures used within the nursery. They have opportunities to discuss their child's needs on a regular basis with staff who are friendly and approachable. This enables the nursery and parents to work together to meet the needs of the children. Although there is no formal arrangement for seeking the views of parents, many parents were happy to discuss their views during the inspection process and were very complimentary in regards to the care their children receive and the support provided by staff.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are generally well cared for because staff caring for the children hold appropriate qualifications and are checked to ensure their suitability to work with children. However, although recruitment procedures are satisfactory there is no system in place to ensure ongoing suitability of adults looking after children. This potentially compromises the safety and welfare of the children. Children benefit from the consistent staff group who continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of childcare and development through training. This broadens children's experience and contributes to the quality of care provided. Policies and procedures are in place to protect children and are used to inform parents and staff of the processes used within the nursery.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager plays an active role within the nursery working alongside staff. However, there are no effective systems in place to monitor the overall effectiveness of the provision for nursery education. Weakness in behaviour management and teaching methods have not been clearly identified and strategies put in place to support staff in making improvements. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

## Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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

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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):

- review and update accident and medication records
- ensure staff are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development
- review systems used to ensure ongoing suitability of adults looking after children
- ensure staff are deployed effectively within the premises to ensure the safety, welfare and development of children.

### 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 the information gained from assessment is used effectively to help children move on to the next stage in their learning
- develop systems to enable staff to build on what children already know
- use varied and suitable teaching methods, for all children, which include effective interaction in children's play to give clear explanations and offer challenging questions.

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)