

Sawtry Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221580
Inspection date	24 September 2007
Inspector	Sheena Osborne
Setting Address	Fen Lane, Sawtry, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE28 5TQ
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Registered person	Sawtry Day Nursery Ltd
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sawtry Day Nursery opened in 1993. It operates in its own premises in the grounds of Sawtry Community College, Sawtry, Cambridgeshire. A maximum of 38 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.45 to 18.00 all year round. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery serves the local area.

There are currently 51 children from birth to five years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

Three part-time and nine full-time staff work with the children. All staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children show continuing excitement and enthusiasm as they participate in an extensive range of outdoor activities which admirably supports their learning and development in all areas. Staff have established an excellent 'free flow' system which enables toddlers and older children to enjoy plenty of outdoor activities according to their needs and preferences throughout out the day. This enables children to benefit from extensive opportunities for vigorous, physical play with a wealth of equipment and apparatus. For example, children thoroughly enjoy digging in the designated 'digging areas', where they develop their muscles and motor skills by filling and handling wheelbarrows full of earth. Children competently climb, balance, travel over, under and through and skilfully change speed and direction as they enjoy the spacious outdoor play areas. They display high levels of confidence when using the variety of equipment offered. Staff skilfully balance the supervision of children and equipment with the need to allow children to take risks. Older children design and create their own obstacle courses using planks of wood and tree stumps. This enables them to develop skills such as co-ordination, climbing and balancing.

Children develop competent small physical skills through access to an extensive range of equipment and activities. They competently use scissors, a computer keyboard and mouse. They show pleasure when using a variety of craft materials during creative activities. They have constant access to writing materials and show well-developed concentration skills as they join together pieces, when using the wide variety of construction equipment.

Babies and young children are supported very well as staff follow their individual routines for regular sleeping and eating patterns in order to promote their growth and development. They develop physical control of their bodies because staff provide appropriate resources, purposeful activities and support, thus enabling children to roll, crawl, pull themselves up to a standing position and learn to feed themselves.

Food is freshly prepared each day and takes account of children's allergies and special diets. Four weekly menus provide a well-balanced diet through an excellent range of meals including traditional, multicultural and child-friendly dishes. Staff working with babies follow individual weaning programmes and feed children according to their own routines. Younger children are provided with a selection of fruit at snack time and older children independently choose from the fruit made available to them. This encourages them to make healthy choices. Children independently access drinks, enabling them to meet their own bodily needs.

Children's good health is promoted effectively by staff who demonstrate an excellent knowledge of the robust procedures for promoting health and hygiene. Excellent procedures such as, staff consistently wearing disposable gloves and aprons for nappy changing, sustains high levels of hygiene and helps to prevent the spread of infection. Children have a clear awareness of their own needs and are developing independence in their personal care routines. For example, they know to wash their hands before eating their snack and after using the toilet as it stops germs spreading.

Staff have a thorough and clear understanding of the procedures to follow when recording accidents and the administration of medication. Parents are required to sign to acknowledge the entries, keeping them informed at all times. An ongoing programme for First Aid training ensures that all staff are aware of how to provide appropriate care in the event of an emergency.

Fully stocked first aid boxes are stored around the setting, ensuring that children will be attended to immediately and appropriately if they have an accident.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are safe because comprehensive vetting and induction procedures are in place for all staff, students and volunteers. Staff are very vigilant about the children's safety and well-being, and staff:child ratios exceed the required minimum. Very good security ensures that all visitors are monitored and recorded, and that accurate registers are kept. Staff are extremely careful and remove any possible hazards to protect the children, for example, reminding them not to leave things in the middle of the floor where others can trip over them. Comprehensive written risk assessments are undertaken regularly, ensuring that all areas of the nursery and the equipment used is safe for the children.

Children learn the importance of keeping themselves safe through the setting's routines. They are efficient at clearing up after themselves which is prompted by the excellent use of music and well timed verbal notification from staff. They have the opportunity to take part in activities such as 'basic first aid for children'. They practise regular fire drills at different times to ensure all children who use the setting understand what to do in an emergency.

The nursery is extremely well organised and safe. Staff routinely carry out daily safety checks to reduce the risks of potential hazards. This effective practice ensures that children can move around safely and freely with increasing independence. Children confidently and independently choose from a well-organised and comprehensive range of equipment, toys and resources. This enables them to explore different types of play and follow their own interests.

The welfare of all children is safeguarded due to the extremely clear policies and procedures in place and the commitment of the staff. There is a detailed child protection statement based on the local authority guidance that is shared with parents. Staff update their knowledge and skills through regular training and are clear about their duty of care to act in the best interests of the child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy and show sustained interest as they experience a variety of dynamic activities that contribute to their development. They make choices and decisions in their area of play and staff follow their interests. All children form warm and trusting relationships with the adults and develop a strong sense of belonging. The nurturing environment and the sensitive, caring nature of the adults providing their care helps children feel totally secure. They happily chat together, sharing their ideas and expressing their thoughts. Staff take time to listen to what children have to say and as a result, they feel valued and included.

Babies and toddlers benefit from flexible routines that enable them to rest or play according to their needs and parents' wishes. The use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework enables babies and toddlers to benefit from a wide range of age-appropriate activities that enable them to progress in all areas of their development. Staff are kind and attentive to their needs. They enjoy a wide range of sensory experiences such as treasure baskets, water play, messy play with jelly or play-dough. These help them to make sense of their world through touch, texture and smell in fun and exciting ways. Older babies' and toddler's self-confidence and independence

is effectively encouraged and nurtured as staff introduce them to appropriate group time such as singing and making meal times a very sociable occasion.

Sensory development is further enhanced in the outdoor area as children listen to the different tones of the wind chimes, smell the different aroma of the herbs they are growing and are visually stimulated as they watch and observe brightly coloured ribbons which are suspended from trees. They squeal with delight as they observe brightly coloured 'flower windmills' being rotated by the wind. They explore different textures whilst digging in a variety of designated areas filled with sand, earth, bark and stones.

Children learn about the importance of recycling materials as they use the compost bin and discover that they can make props from boxes, cartons, tubes and material to extend their play such as making a pirate ship. Children's early communication skills are well supported through good quality interaction with staff and by the use of signing and singing.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are making excellent progress towards the stepping stones in all six areas of learning because staff fully understand that children learn best when playing and taking part in activities that stimulate their individual interests. Staff have an excellent knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and of each child's individual stage of development. Key workers carry out detailed observations of children as they play so that they can use them to assess children's progress; assessment records are used to plan future activities that build on what children already know and can do. Staff skilfully set up a child-friendly environment which offers children a wide range of exciting play opportunities both indoors and outdoors. They interact well with them to challenge and extend their learning. Resources are organised to encourage children to develop their independence and autonomy and take pride in their achievements. For example, children are able to display their own work on a low level display area. As a result, children are eager and excited about learning. They are superbly supported as they progress towards becoming independent learners.

Children use mathematical language in their play because the staff provide many thought provoking opportunities for them to explore mathematics through practical and purposeful activities. For example, exploring volume in the water tray and looking at size as they compare lengths of garden hose when they play a game of fire fighters. Children count confidently, recognise and name shapes and are able to match and sort objects. They learn about numbers and calculations when staff encourage them to help to lay the table for lunch, discussing 'how many more knives' they need to complete the job.

Children are wonderfully confident and organise their own play. They co-operate well when making up a train track and as they organise football games. They concentrate extremely well, at their chosen tasks, such as playing with Lego and digging in the garden, and during adult-led activities, such as story-time. They are absorbed in their character's role as they act out their favourite story, 'Giant Hiccups'. They make excellent progress in linking letter shapes and sounds, as they discuss the letter and the initial sound of their name, and attempt to draw the letter shape. They are offered many opportunities to write for different purposes, such as making lists during role play, and they are able to recognise and begin to write their names.

Children respond well to adult expectations of behaviour, showing the ability to negotiate and co-operate effectively with each other. They are friendly and show care and concern for each other. For example, a small group of children work together at the computer. They support

each other by giving clear instructions to a child who is not familiar with the programme. This enables the child to persevere and complete the task. Children show a natural care for living things as they observe their pet guinea pigs, making sure they have plenty of water and food inside their cage. Children enjoy excellent and exciting opportunities to explore the natural world through first-hand experiences, for example, planting and growing herbs in the garden and seeking out bugs that live under the logs purposely put there for this reason. Children are extremely imaginative in their role play and have free access to an excellent range of creative materials. They explore colour, texture, sound and rhythm through activities such as painting, junk modelling, musical instruments and dance.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children socialise with their peers and learn about the wider community through walks in the local area, visits to the library and being actively involved in the village carnival. They have access to resources that reflect diversity so that they learn about other culture and life styles through a range of purposeful activities. Staff consistently praise and encourage children. They have high, realistic expectations of them all, resulting in behaviour which is exemplary. For example, they are actively encouraged to think about the needs of others as they share and take turns, and enjoy the responsibility given to them when they set the table at meal times. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Equality of opportunity is exceptionally well promoted within the setting because staff are fully aware of children's individual needs. Children are able to follow their normal routines, as discussed with their parents. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive excellent support because staff are committed to the inclusion of all children within the setting. They ensure that resources are accessible and adaptable to support these needs, thus enabling all children to fully participate in the activities available in the setting.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Staff have excellent systems for communicating regularly with parents, so that children's care is consistent. They involve parents as key partners in their children's learning and establish strong relationships with them. Parents receive clear information about the setting and the education offered before children attend. There are calm and unrushed opportunities to exchange information every day and ongoing opportunities for parents to meet with their child's key worker. Staff regularly share the records they keep on children's progress with parents. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's progress records and be closely involved in the work to support their child's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The setting is continually developing because the proprietor, manager and staff have a clear vision for the nursery. They are committed to continuous improvement and development, aiming to provide a first class service which meets the needs of all the children. The premises are extremely well-organised. Space is maximised and all areas are utilised fully to enhance children's care and education. For example, the outside area is particularly well organised to provide a wealth of additional play and learning opportunities for children. Staff are deployed in a highly effective way, enabling them to focus completely on the children. Consequently, the children are purposefully engaged in their play and are extremely happy and settled.

Staff working with the children are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and consistently promote the children's well being in line with comprehensive and robust policies and procedures. They demonstrate an excellent knowledge and understanding of the National Standards for Full Day Care, the Foundation Stage curriculum guidance and the 'Birth to three matters' framework to help children achieve well. A clear recruitment and selection procedure is in place. Staff appointments are followed by a detailed induction which is conducted by a member of the staff team. Regular staff meetings and yearly appraisals are conducted ensuring all staff are working in a consistent way across the provision and that training needs are met.

All regulatory documentation is in place, very well organised and used effectively to underpin the staff's outstanding practice. The children's continuity of care is promoted well as clear documentation is used very effectively to exchange information with parents.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The proprietor and manager motivate staff through their passion, enthusiasm and commitment to raise standards to ensure that children receive a high quality early years and learning experience. Children benefit from the excellent leadership and management of the whole provision. Staff ratios are high which allows time for the staff teams to coordinate planning and assessment each week. Staff are enthusiastic, regularly evaluate their work to identify strengths and weaknesses and are proactive in implementing changes to strengthen practice. They have started preparing for and looking at how they can adapt their practices to enable the smooth implementation of The Early Years Foundation Stage when it is introduced in 2008. Continual and rigorous monitoring procedures enable staff to maintain the high standard of teaching and keep abreast of new childcare initiatives. This has a positive impact on children's learning, development and welfare.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last child care inspection the provider agreed to improve documentation by clarifying the role of Ofsted in the complaints procedure, and by ensuring that parents give written permission for the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment. Documentation has been updated. This ensure parents are kept fully informed and enables staff to take appropriate action in the event of a child becoming ill whilst in their care. Therefore promoting children's health.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider agreed to consider how everyday activities such as snack-time can be used to give children opportunities to count. Staff use spontaneous opportunities to encourage children to count such as, counting how many cup they need when setting the table for lunch. Therefore enhancing their learning experience.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1st April 2004 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.

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The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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