



Easthill Park House

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY306179
Inspection date	20 April 2006
Inspector	Susan McCourt
Setting Address	Easthill Park, Portslade, Brighton, East Sussex, BN41 2FA
Telephone number	07841 215588
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Registered person	Brighton & Hove Council Pre-School SEN Service
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?

Easthill Park was registered in 2005 and has provided services for children with special needs for many years. It is based in part of a converted house in Portslade and is managed by Brighton and Hove Council. The setting comprises one playroom including a soft play area. The building is set in a large park, and children use the outdoor facilities alongside the public.

Children in their pre-reception year attend from 09:30 to 14:45 and the group runs on

Thursday/Friday only. Children who are a year younger attend an early intervention group which runs for twelve-week periods, twice a year, on Wednesday mornings from 09:30 to 12:00.

The provision is registered for full day care for seven children. There are currently ten children on roll, six of whom receive funding for nursery education. The provision supports children with special needs, some of whom have English as an additional language.

There are nine staff, all of whom are qualified for their role. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in a clean environment and can access wipes or liquid soap and paper towels to take care of their personal hygiene. Children are protected from cross-infection because any used tissue goes straight into the bin and children who are unwell do not attend. Excellent systems are in place to ensure that any medical need can be taken care of, from complex issues to simple administration of short term medications. All staff, including those who act as escorts when transporting, are aware of how to respond, which safeguards children's health. All staff maintain their first aid training and have easy access to first aid boxes.

Children eat a good range of healthy snacks provided by the setting including fruit, samosas, rice cakes and crackers. Children who are entitled to the free school meals service however, have adequately healthy foods which are supplemented by the setting. Parents can provide packed lunches which are stored correctly to ensure that food does not spoil. Children who attend the setting may have complex issues around food which are addressed skilfully by staff as part of the individual education plan (IEP). Children learn an excellent variety of social eating skills such as staying at the table and passing food round to share. Children learn to be independent in feeding themselves, asking for the things that they need with the help of a visual menu. Drinks are available at any time as children can ask in words, signs and by using a push-button device which is prominently labelled and attached to the wall at child height. Children with gastrostomies are given drinks according to the individual's health protocol.

Children make excellent progress in their physical development. Children's small muscle control develops through using their favourite toys requiring a pincer grasp or hand-eye co-ordination which in turn enhances their ability to use simple tools such as trowels or paint brushes. Children enjoy setting their own challenges when using soft play equipment, such as rolling over cylinders down a large slide. Children who have specific difficulties with speech and language take part in physical games such as licking a spot of toothpaste off their upper lip, or blowing out a candle, which helps to develop relevant skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in an excellent learning environment. The play room can be divided in half with sensory and soft play in one half and general play in the other. The room has easy access to toilets and nappy change areas. The children's play area is warm, with natural light and a vast array of interesting displays at child height which include textured, reflective and patterned surfaces. There is ample furniture, including fully-adjustable individualised chairs for those children who need specific support when sitting. The building does not have its own outdoor area but is situated in extensive park grounds which include a sensory garden and play park. Children use these facilities as a regular part of their day, but do not always have sole use. The setting is very well-equipped with a cosy book corner and role play or messy areas. Play materials are stored at child-height and have word-and-picture labels to help children make their selections.

Staff use a rigorous risk assessment process for activities and routines which means that children are kept safe. Staff ensure that children are always well-supervised, and activities and outings are well-planned in terms of children's individual special needs. Children being transported to and from home have consistent drivers and escorts as part of an established service. There is a buzzer entry system to ensure that the building is secure. Evacuation procedures have been planned with the Fire Safety Officer to ensure that children's needs are not compromised during fire drills.

Children's welfare is paramount. All staff are aware of their role and responsibility with regard to child protection. Staff have all received training, and senior staff have done advanced child protection training. All staff have written guidance as to how to report and record any concerns and have excellent awareness of the particular needs of the children in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle in quickly and are warmly welcomed by staff. Children are familiar with routines and activities that are ably adapted to suit their individual developmental needs. They are successful in the learning environment and receive instant positive feedback for their achievements which builds their self-esteem and confidence. Children take part in an excellent range of activities through the day which supports their development and learning. They make decisions, explore and investigate at their own pace and staff are very skilled at achieving a balance between providing support and offering challenges. Children learn to relate to each other, and develop their skills in listening and communicating in an excellent supportive environment. Staff value all children's attempts to engage with the learning as well as with their peer group.

Nursery Education

The teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff are highly qualified and experienced

and get to know individual children very well. Staff have an excellent knowledge of the Foundation Stage and more importantly, have an excellent understanding of how to enable children to develop the skills to access the curriculum. The children's starting points, given that they may have severe learning difficulties or disabilities, mean that staff have to assess each child's language, cognitive ability, gross and fine motor skills as well as their communication, self-care, play and social skills. Staff set the routine and activities to build children's abilities according to their IEPs which involves developing along each of these developmental strands. Each aspect of the routine such as changing from one activity to the next, or explaining the order of events for that morning, is carefully planned in order to maximise the children's opportunity to take part and understand what is happening. This meticulous attention to detail ensures that children develop new skills quickly in an atmosphere which is both calm and enjoyable, maximising their ability to develop to their individual potential. Staff also adapt their plans if they feel children are tired or in particular moods, which means that children's play is always expertly facilitated.

Staff make extensive observations of the children's abilities and progress and incorporate them into future plans and IEPs, which means that children's learning is always rooted in their achievements. They also work alongside a wider team of professionals including speech therapists and medical staff to ensure that children's individual needs are fully understood. Parents are closely involved, meaning that any achievements made at home are also known to staff. This multi-disciplinary approach maximises the children's chances to progress at their own pace in an environment which fully meets their needs.

Children make excellent progress in play skills such as co-operating, sharing and taking turns. They can be independent in the setting and learn ways to signal to staff what they would like to do next. Excellent routines and transition management from staff helps children to feel confident and secure, and to take part in routine activities themselves. Children can observe each other, showing empathy to the feelings of others when they take a favourite toy to their friend. Children can learn to communicate in a variety of ways, using speech, sign language and relevant objects to express themselves. Children have excellent opportunities to see print and understand that marks have meaning, and they ascribe meaning to the marks that they make themselves. They enjoy looking at books and can see and make their own books about recent outings or events. Children enjoy taking part in story times - acting fierce or scared along with the characters in the story for example.

Children have good opportunities to learn to count and to match numerals to groups of objects. They have excellent opportunities to see patterns in the numerous pieces of fabric and designs that are placed at child height throughout the setting. Children play with jugs and scoops which helps them to learn about capacity, and they can match shapes in inset puzzles. Staff use mathematical language to help children describe and make comparisons. Children have excellent access to natural objects and materials like soil, fir cones and small branches of blossom. They learn about the wider world during outings and themed activities. After a trip to a garden centre, children handle fresh compost and plant the young seedlings they have individually chosen and bought. Children use small furniture to make a vehicle inspection pit when playing mechanics and co-operate with each other in such role play. Children have favourite songs and can tap in rhythm. Their art and craft work is entirely

independent, and displayed attractively, which helps children to value their achievements.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Parents can see leaflets in a variety of languages, and posters and displays show positive images of people from different cultures. Children use flesh-tone paints and take part in meaningful activities which reflect the festivals of different cultures. Children have good self-esteem because each individual is highly valued. Staff work closely with the service for children with English as an additional language to ensure that they understand the particular cultural needs of individual families.

All children who attend have special needs and staff have excellent training to ensure that they can respond effectively to all the children in their care. Children receive consistent care because staff work alongside parents and other professionals to co-ordinate their interventions. The setting is committed to inclusion in its widest sense and will make adaptations to ensure that children and their families can take a full part.

Behaviour management is placed in a social context which places the responsibility for children's behaviour firmly with the staff. This ensures that adults are excellent role models and that the routines and activities are organised to fully support children. Children learn ways of behaving that improve their play skills and are always treated in a calm and consistent way. Staff give short and clear messages about what is expected and always ensure they have the child's attention. Children can learn their own strategies for managing their behaviour, which are designed by staff to reduce frustration and anxiety, and aid or reinforce communication. Children hear lots of positive messages about their positive behaviour, which builds on their strengths, enhances their self-esteem and enables them to feel pride in their personal achievements.

The partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents are given excellent information about how the setting works and staff make home visits as part of the careful settling-in process. Parents can talk to staff or drop-in at any time, and can attend sessions to observe their own child. The setting uses an excellent home-school book which gives a full picture of what each child is doing and achieving on a daily basis, and parents can add to the book in whichever way they want. Parents can also attend for coffee mornings or Makaton workshops and can access support for using speech therapy techniques at home. The setting can co-ordinate some of the multi-disciplinary meetings that centre on the child and can put parents in touch with groups who offer peer support. This degree of support reflects the deep commitment that the setting has to the family of each child attending, and parents value it highly.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are part of a group and take part in the social aspects such as eating together, and sharing tasks to get things done. They learn about right and wrong, and how to treat each other with respect. Children are given time and space to be absorbed by their play and to be fascinated by what they see around them.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. All recruitment and staff checks are undertaken by Brighton and Hove Council and the staff are all well-qualified and experienced for their roles. Good systems are in place to ensure that children do not come into contact with unvetted adults. Staff are deployed effectively to ensure that staff-child ratios are always surpassed and that children are always supervised. Registers are an accurate reflection of the children and adults present, and are completed as soon as any child arrives or departs. Excellent policies and procedures underpin everything that happens in the setting and they are reviewed and maintained in line with best practice. All information is kept secure and confidential.

The leadership and management is outstanding. Managers and staff have developed a children's charter which informs everything they do and places the child at the centre of their service. All staff are committed to the holistic support of children and their families and work closely with parents and other professionals to achieve their goal. Staff receive excellent support and training to carry out their roles and are very successful in meeting the high expectations placed upon them. The managers have a rigorous approach to continual improvement, recognising their strengths as a team and taking a robust attitude to solving any problems.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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 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 *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk