



Puffins at Manston Terrace

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY300245
Inspection date	15 June 2006
Inspector	Janet Butlin
Setting Address	3 Manston Terrace, Exeter, Devon, EX2 4NP
Telephone number	01392 496017
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Registered person	Puffins of Exeter Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Puffins at Manston Terrace is a privately owned nursery. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 07:30 until 18:00, 51 weeks of the year. The nursery is one of eight in the Puffins of Exeter group. The premises consist of a detached, Georgian, three-storey listed building, situated in a residential area of St Leonard's, Exeter, close to local shops, parks, schools and the city centre. The children are cared for in four groups, each with its own staff team. The babies aged from birth to 15 months

are accommodated in the basement area; children aged 15 to 24 months and 20 to 30 months are accommodated on the ground floor and children aged 30 months to five years are accommodated on the first floor. The top floor of the building is used for staff and training facilities. The fully enclosed, rear back garden is used for outdoor play and children are taken on outings to local facilities such as the museum, Quay, shops and parks and by minibus to the airport.

There are currently 87 children on roll, 25 of whom are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children with special educational needs are supported. There are no children attending who have English as an additional language

The supernumerary nursery manager is qualified to NVQ Level 4 in Early Years Childcare and Education and Supervisory Management. She heads a team of 21 staff; eight are qualified to NVQ level three, six to level two, six other members of staff are working towards qualification. The nursery also employs a cook. The nursery completed an accreditation scheme in November 2001 and is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association. Puffins of Exeter holds the "Investor In People" Award and receives the support of the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean environment. They are well cared for in an emergency as sufficient staff hold First Aid qualifications. Also systems are in place to record any accidents and the administering of medication, and appropriate consents have been obtained. Children benefit from the nursery's prompt response to ensuring that all staff are appropriately trained to support specific medical needs. Children carefully follow hygiene procedures, such as washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating, but older children do not have access to sufficient wash basins or hot water to improve this process. This means that at busy times, such as before lunch, a queue can build up. Nappy changing procedures for babies and young children are appropriate and scrupulous hygiene is observed.

Children enjoy excellent meals, which are highly nutritious in content and which are provided in ample quantity. Their snacks are a healthy combination of fruit and increasing children's enjoyment of fruit and vegetables to sustain their good health, is an area the nursery are passionate about. They are developing new initiatives to promote healthy eating by providing healthy snack bags of fruit for the children to enjoy on the way home. Children's individual dietary needs are well supported. Children remain well hydrated and older children are able to access water from the drinks dispenser whenever they want to. Also staff remind the children to take a drink when they have been outside playing and have become warm.

Children develop their large muscles effectively as they run about outside and climb and balance with skill and control. They operate wheeled toys skilfully, and show a

good awareness of space. They enjoy fresh air every day, using the groups enclosed rear garden. They are conscientiously protected from the sun by the application of sun cream and the judicious use of natural shade.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a well organised environment where they have sufficient space to play and to rest. The premises are welcoming and effectively organised to provide dedicated floors for specific age groupings. This means that, overall, sufficient facilities and resources are to hand to meet their needs. Babies enjoy an extremely attractively organised and well presented sensory room. Children play in a safe and secure outside play area which is well equipped for play.

Children access a good range of toys and games, all of which are in good condition and are clean. Babies play with an exciting and interesting range of objects which stimulate their senses. These are clean and presented in such a way that they can access them safely and regularly. Some playthings, such as puppets, are used very effectively to help children think about keeping themselves safe.

Children are kept safe within a secure building. Visitors to the setting are rigorously recorded and the attendance of children and staff is promptly logged and the exact times clearly shown. This means it is an accurate means of knowing who is on the premises. Appropriate ratios are maintained at all times, however, it is not totally clear, from the forms used, how this is achieved. Children practice the fire evacuation procedure regularly. However, these drills are not efficiently recorded and contain no helpful detail to inform and improve practice.

Children's safety is further supported by staff's good understanding of the child protection procedure.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by sensitive, consistent and responsive staff who are enthusiastic and interested in their work with children. Young children benefit from staff's secure understanding of the Birth to three matters framework. Babies have warm and caring relationships with their individual key-worker and are comfortable and at ease at all times. They explore interesting materials and make discoveries. They communicate with the other babies, sharing their books and exploring musical toys together. Toddlers enjoy social situations and develop their communication skills, whilst still receiving reassurance from sensitive staff. Regular observations are made on children's achievements and interests, which helps staff to plan for their progression.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress

towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. They have excellent attitudes to learning, showing high levels of interest in all their activities. Staff are enthusiastic and use effective strategies to help children learn, for example leaving gaps in the story for the children to predict what rhyme will come next. Plans show that a broad curriculum is offered, over time, which covers all the areas of learning. The staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and sometimes link this knowledge into their use of Schemas to plan for the children. However, it is not clear, from the highly detailed assessment system, what the immediate targets are for the next steps in their learning. The children's progress in some areas is not recorded often enough to truly reflect their progress which indicates that some children could be making even better progress than their assessments imply.

Effective use is made of time and children enjoy their activities in their key-worker groups where they have well supported learning. However, their periods of free play do not give sufficient opportunity for children to initiate and extend their own learning. For example, resources are not always available for children to enjoy the process of being creative by freely applying paint or making models. Children are always engaged and eager to contribute to the activities. They are extremely lively communicators. They share their news eagerly and engage each other in interesting debate, for example, explaining the intricacies of vampire bats and their habitats. They explore rhyme and are familiar with the sounds that letters make. Children count confidently and recreate patterns using small toys. Helpful strategies are used to help children link numerals to the quantity they represent. They have some opportunities to develop their calculation skills. Children develop their understanding of the wider world by going on walks, trips, and observing the growth of their tadpoles in the nursery fish tank. They develop their small muscles effectively as they pour their own drinks and serve themselves lunch, using appropriate utensils. Children enjoy music as an aid to relaxation and they develop imaginative role play using puppets and dressing up. Opportunities to fully enjoy the process of being creative by exploring a variety of media are not presented often enough.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are known and very well supported. For example, children who require special diets are provided with nutritious alternatives which are so similar in appearance to the main menu that they feel included. Children and staff are learning sign language and all children benefit from this new experience which enriches their communication and understanding of others. They glow with pride when they achieve a new skill, such as signing their name. They share toys and work well in groups, for example, negotiating, planning and constructing a complex block structure which involved large scale problem solving. Children thank staff politely at meal times, sometimes using French, and have very good table manners. Older children wait until all are served before beginning to eat, showing care and concern. Children are confident and eager to learn. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children who have special educational needs are well supported. Effective strategies

are used to support children's development, such as ensuring resources and games are provided to stimulate speech and communication.

Children are well behaved and respond to calm and consistent staff. Effective strategies are used, such as praise and reminding children about rules. Stories and puppets help children to understand the difference between right and wrong and to think about the feelings of others.

Partnership with parents is good. Children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes. The nursery provides regular opportunities for parents to attend open-days where they can look at their children's files and have discussions with staff. This is in addition to daily informal discussions and their individual day-to-day diary of care. However, the children's assessment files are complex and it is not immediately apparent to parents what the next steps are for their child's learning. The daily diaries provide a clear and helpful means of communicating with parents across all age groups. Overall, the nursery takes positive steps to ensure that parents are kept well informed about all relevant policies and procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a well organised environment where all persons looking after them are suitable to do so. They are cared for by sensitive staff who are keen to reflect on their practice and enhance the experiences of the children by attending further training. They come back from training enthused and this is transferred to the children. This is evidenced, for example, by the positive way the children have responded to learning some sign language. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. All regulatory documentation and systems are in place, although some require improvement.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Regular monitoring and key worker meetings ensure that the nursery curriculum is well maintained. Staff are supported in their professional development, and where appropriate, support is sought from the local authority. A feature of the management is the frequent, regular use of self evaluation to identify areas for improvement. For example, enriching the partnership with parents is an area the nursery are working hard to develop. They plan to extend services, and the thoughtful way they have already implemented their plan to promote healthy eating has helped children to learn about keeping healthy.

Improvements since the last inspection

This is the group's first integrated inspection since registration. However, since registration the nursery were required to review all existing communication strategies with parents to ensure that these are as effective as possible. There are very good systems in place to facilitate easy communication and the nursery respond to parental choices. For example they have elected to hold an open day twice a year, increase home visits, respond to parental feedback and encourage parents to take their child's folder home more frequently. Improving the ways in which parents find

out about, and understand, the targets for their children is an area for development.

Complaints since the last inspection

On 23rd March, 2005, Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standard 5 - Equipment; National Standard 6 - Safety; National Standard 7 - Health and National Standard 12 - Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers. Ofsted made an unannounced visit to the provider and discussed in detail the concerns that were raised. The discussions and observations focused on the requirements of the National Standards. Documentation was also checked and observations of day-to-day practice were also made. In relation to the concerns a recommendation was made to review all existing communication strategies with parents to ensure that these are as effective as possible. This will be reviewed at the next inspection. The provider remains qualified for 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.

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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):

- improve hand-washing procedures for the children in the Foundation Stage unit
- improve the recording of fire drills to include more detail and the attendance of staff to make it clearer how ratios are maintained

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):

- develop the assessment system to ensure it is clear what the next steps are for the children's learning and continue to make this information easily

accessible to parents

- develop free play situations to improve ways in which children can initiate their own learning, particularly in the area of creative development

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