



Oakmeadow Childcare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY258696
Inspection date	25 September 2006
Inspector	Elly Bik-Kuen Wong
Setting Address	Oakmeadow Early Years Centre, Tewkesbury Avenue, Fareham, Hampshire, PO15 6LL
Telephone number	01329 849 349
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Registered person	Community Childcare Centres
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School care, Crèche

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?

Oak Meadow Childcare Centre is part of Community Childcare Centres Limited, which is a non-profit making registered charity. It opened in 2003 and operates from premises within Oak Meadow Early Years Centre in Fareham, Hampshire, and has strong links with all service providers based there. A maximum of 70 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks a year. In addition a crèche that is registered for 18 children, and an out-of-school club and holiday play scheme that is registered for 35 children also operate from the site. The setting serves children from the local and surrounding communities. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 93 nursery children aged from three months to under five years on roll, including 54 three or four year olds who are in receipt of funding for early education. Within the out-of-school club there are currently 22 children aged from five to under eight years on

roll, and children over eight years are also received. They can attend before school and after-school, and are collected from a few local schools. Up to 18 children aged from three months to under five years can attend the crèche for two hours each time when their parents attend adult training courses run at the centre. Children attend for a variety of sessions, and the setting currently supports children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs a resident cook and 23 members of staff who work with children. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications and mostly at level three, while another three are working towards a relevant qualification. The centre and group managers are currently working towards a Foundation Degree in Early Childhood Studies. All staff regularly attend training programmes to update their childcare knowledge and skills. The company holds the 'Investors in People' award for their commitment to staff development and training. The Oak Meadow Childcare Centre works closely with the primary school on the same site, and receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's good health and growth is extremely well promoted by the centre's healthy eating policy. It has regular deliveries of fresh organic vegetables and fruits, which are used by the tireless resident cook to provide nutritious snacks and wholesome, balanced hot meals. Nursery and out-of-school club children enjoy a wide range of fresh fruits, wholemeal bread/toasts and cereals as daily snacks. Meal and snack times are very pleasurable social events when staff sit with the children to talk, share news and encourage good table manners. Staff encourage children to talk about what they like or do not like to eat, and whether they know where certain common foods come from. When children do not know where chips come from, staff plan for them to learn more about potatoes. Children benefit from and relish their first hand experiences of planting and growing vegetables in the nursery garden, including potatoes, carrots, tomatoes, cucumbers, courgettes and runner beans. Children help to water them, observe their growth, draw and then eat them as salads or vegetable dishes which they sometimes help to cook. Children learn that 'they make you strong and help you grow'. Lunches are offered at fixed times, but snack times are flexible with the cafeteria system for the pre-school and after-school children. They serve themselves food or pour themselves drinks such as water, milk or juice, which help to prevent dehydration and maintain their body's healthy metabolism. While the younger children are given suitable drinks at set times and when needed, the older ones are very independent in accessing water from the water dispenser and pouring water from a jug to satisfy their thirst. All these daily activities are most conducive to children's emerging awareness about their own body and health.

Children benefit tremendously from a clean and hygienic environment because staff follow stringent procedures to clean, wash and/or disinfect surfaces and floors. Staff demonstrate clear understanding about sound hygiene practices which are vital in protecting children from germs and infection. They put emphasis on regular hand washing during their care of children, such as before preparing food. They use disposable gloves and aprons during nappy changing

to prevent the spread of infection. Bed sheets and flannels are washed and changed daily, while toys for small children are washed regularly to ensure good hygiene. Staff actively encourage children to be responsible for their own health by developing the good habit of hand washing before food and after toilet or play. The youngest children receive excellent support by staff, while the pre-school children are independent in toileting and hand washing, which they practise consistently in the purpose-built toilets with child-friendly facilities.

The whole staff team are well trained in food hygiene and work to very rigorous procedures to ensure that drinks and foods are stored, prepared, cooked or reheated in an appropriate and safe manner for all children. Staff are vigilant and display allergy lists to remind about those children and staff with special dietary or health requirements, thus ensuring their health and safety during the daily routines. There is a sickness policy both in the parents handbook and displayed clearly on the wall for parents, with useful information about recommended exclusion periods for common childhood illnesses. This impacts on parents knowing their responsibility clearly to help prevent the spread of infection if their own child becomes unwell. Those children who fall ill while at the centre are comforted and cared for sensitively by staff whilst awaiting collection by their parents. Management ensure that all staff have up-to-date first aid training, so that children are fully protected in case of accidents and emergencies. First aid boxes are stored at strategic places around the centre and taken on outings so that children requiring urgent attention can be assisted without delay. Good systems are in place for recording accidents and the administration of medicines, thus safeguarding children and ensuring that parents are fully informed.

Children of all ages benefit greatly from the centre's strong emphasis on physical development. They have ample opportunities for daily physical play in the centre and during regular walks within the adjacent school grounds and fields. Some after-school children benefit from daily walking exercise as part of the 'walking bus' when travelling to the centre. They enjoy regular sports and ball games, as well as special dance tuition. The older nursery children benefit greatly from free flow into the garden for fresh air and exercise, weather permitting, and develop a good sense of space as they play and explore. They relish digging with genuine child-sized garden tools in the 'digging hole' to look for mini beasts or tend the vegetable plot. Children also have lots of fun playing parachute, ball and garden games. They feel a sense of excitement when they run around playing hide-and-seek in the wooded part of the garden, which is safely enclosed. They also take part regularly in a wide range of stimulating indoor physical play within their rooms or the centre's large hall, for example, soft play, dance and movement, and physical activities using a very good range of age-appropriate apparatus. Toddlers and babies practise crawling, bending, pulling up and climbing on a small slide, using a cup or cutlery, holding finger foods, and stirring cake mix for baking. They open box lids to discover their contents during heuristic play, or press buttons on brightly coloured activity centres or toy musical instruments that make animal and other noises, and 'wiggle to the music'. All these resources and activities are excellent in promoting children's physical development, helping to build good muscle strength, stamina, balance and co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the child-centred layout and extensive play resources which they can access easily and safely at the various group rooms. Each age group have their own designated base room equipped to meet their needs. The babies also benefit from sharing some of the space and resources in the toddlers' room for their play and development. All children have access to the shared garden, adjacent hall and school grounds and fields for their play and exploration. There is no staff room currently but building works are starting to add one for providing staff with a private space during breaks. Within the playrooms, there is well organised storage of play resources, tools and materials on low tables, shelves, and in labelled drawers to assist children's self-selection and independence. All areas are welcoming and appealing to children and families due to the vibrant and attractive décor using colourful displays, movable lighting and hung fabrics, as well as children's creative art work. There are stimulating displays of information, reference books and interest tables with objects that relate to the main learning themes and topics to support children's learning.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure manner, as staff observe and supervise children effectively. They constantly assess the premises and equipment to minimise risks for children. Broken toys and equipment are removed, so that only safe resources are available for children to access. Radiators are all fitted with guards to prevent accidental injury such as burns. Safety gates and fencing are used indoors/outdoors to secure the environment for children's play. Access doors generally have both a low and high handle to keep children secure. The nursery benefit from an intercom entry system that helps staff to monitor visitors, who have to be greeted by a member of staff. A record of all visitors is maintained throughout the day with the signing-in book to ensure that children are safeguarded. The parents of the pre-school and after-school children assist staff in this procedure by signing their children in and out. Each group room has its own register for recording children's attendance, though not all room registers are sufficiently detailed about early departures and late arrivals to form an up-to-date fire register for protecting children. There is a safe system for collecting children at home time: only pre-agreed persons such as parents/carers or their representatives, whose photos are kept at the office, are able to do so. All staff have undergone in-house or external child protection training, and the managers to an advanced level, so they are very clear about the necessary procedures, which are shared with parents, for safeguarding children.

While Management undertake comprehensive written risk assessments regularly, staff go through a safety checklist at the end of the day to ensure that the playrooms are safe and ready for children to use the following day. Staff also ensure that children know how to use equipment safely, for example, children practise using a hammer and nails safely to make a wooden bird table for the garden. They show good spatial and safety awareness when practising emergency evacuation during regular fire drills, which are recorded. Children are also encouraged by staff to look out for hazards in the environment during regular walks in the neighbourhood. When after-school children travel to the centre in the form of a 'walking bus', they practise the road safety code to protect themselves. Pre-school children on local excursions are prompted to identify hazards to their health and safety, and children learn to be observant and point out risks such as dog mess and uneven surfaces like a manhole, and know to avoid them. This

impacts on children being able to protect themselves through developing an awareness of the environment and the hazards that it may pose.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thrive in the stimulating atmosphere and child-centred environment, where their needs are treated as paramount by the caring and supportive staff. The younger and newer children develop their confidence through extra attention by their assigned key worker as well as other staff. Children arriving at the nursery feel a sense of achievement as they 'register' themselves by choosing their own name tag. Children of all ages build good relationships with both their peers and the adults, and the more established children often help by showing their newer counterparts what to do around the room. Toddlers and babies in the nursery enjoy excellent opportunities to become competent learners and skilful communicators. They benefit from a wide range of sensory experiences, exploring colours and textures with 'treasure baskets' and everyday materials. For example, staff enable them to use their hands to mix white salad cream with tomato sauce, and then experiment in mixing further food dye colours while supported by staff, before they do hand printing on the wall mounted with paper. Babies and toddlers feel motivated to 'converse' with staff during their daily play through babbling, gurgling, and smiling, for example, when they delight in seeing their reflection in the mirror. These children become 'chatty' due to the good interaction by staff, and begin to make recognisable sounds and words, for example, when they want to eat 'nanna' (banana), or say 'ello' or 'ta' for greetings and good manners.

Crèche children who attend for up to two hours (when adult courses are running) are happily occupied with an appropriate range of toys and activities. Children at the after-school club are happy and relaxed because they can 'chill out' by chatting to their friends, or socialise over computer games, small worlds, mini snooker or outdoor team sports. Some choose to be creative over plasticine models or be imaginative with the home corner toys or dressing up clothes. Children build good relationships with staff and their school friends, as well as across the whole intake, which derives from four different local schools. Staff offer a good range of stimulating activities, offering their support when needed, but also knowing when to just stand back and allow children the time and space to complete their chosen play. This impacts on a high level of satisfaction among children at the end of their busy school day.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The ethos of child-centred learning permeates the whole nursery, where children are given time, resources and the freedom to pursue their own interest and choices among a wide range of stimulating and age-appropriate activities. The staff team consist of experienced as well as more recently trained staff, who show good understanding of the Foundation Stage, and help children make good or rapid progress in the different areas of learning. Staff are totally committed to a child-led curriculum, and skilfully use spontaneous situations to help children make the most of incidental learning during the day. They make simple termly and daily plans which are linked to the stepping stones, and allow them to continually evolve during the day and week according to children's own ideas and choices. For example, when they read a story about a teddy going up to the moon, the children

become interested about space, so it gives staff the idea to talk about space travel, and the Stars and Planets like Mars and Pluto. This leads to children's enthusiasm and hunger for learning, great confidence and self-esteem, whilst making rapid progress in personal and social skills, as well as in the knowledge and understanding of the world.

Staff skilfully use open-ended questioning to prompt children to think and extend their vocabulary and ideas. The more experienced staff pitch the activities at the right level for individual children, so they are challenged appropriately and make rapid progress in their learning. Key workers and other staff observe and listen carefully to what children say and want, and become familiar with individual children's learning style and ability, thus able to move them onto the next stage. They record their observations of children's achievements, though the various recording formats do not always include accurate dates nor provide a clear and coherent picture of individual children's achievements at any one time. This impacts on children making good rather than rapid progress in those areas where their progress is not clearly tracked.

There are outstanding practices in promoting children's personal and social skills, knowledge and understanding of the wider world, as well as creative development. Children are immersed in a very caring environment where they learn to be considerate and respectful of one another. They are motivated and involved in their learning, and enthusiastic when taking part in the extensive range of stimulating activities. Most children are confident in accessing play resources by themselves, and know to ask staff for support with activities when needed. They show good levels of concentration, for example, when making observational drawings of pumpkins, or digging and shovelling to look for mini beasts in the garden.

Staff help children learn through direct first hand experiences, as well as through discussions, role play and looking at stories, and reference books and materials. Children benefit from rich outdoor learning experiences as they free flow into the garden throughout the day. They water and look after the vegetables such as tomatoes, and then observe their growth and changes in colours and size, before tasting and eating them, as well as learning about their value to their health. Children have lots of fun role playing on the slide/climbing frame as pirates looking out at the high seas with a telescope. Children gain great satisfaction from building long wooden train tracks that sometimes extend well into the trees at the back of the garden, which they call the London Tube. They put their 'tube train' imaginatively above 'River Thames' as represented by some blue fabric provided by staff. Staff purposefully team up those children who need to develop their social skills to build the train tracks together. This impacts on children developing good peer group relationships as well as self-esteem, which in turn helps to improve their behaviour and their hunger for more play and learning.

Staff use their time, space and resources well to promote and extend children's learning. Children handle modern technology with ease, such as when they manipulate an overhead projector to make shadows on the wall. They practise using children's programmes on the computer, which unfortunately requires replacing as it has broken down. When children want to learn about Space and the Planets, staff encourage children to build a model spaceship using large bricks and bowls. Children read stories and look at posters and reference books provided by staff before they design their 'spaceship'. This includes a view out of the 'cockpit', which is made from children's drawings of the stars and planets that they would have seen in space. Children

also create the 'night sky' by painting creatively with glitter on black fabric, which staff then hang from the ceiling to support children's imaginative journey to space. All these activities help children to make excellent progress in their knowledge and understanding of the wider world, as well as in art and model making, imagination and creative development.

Children interact well with others and engage in spontaneous chatter, for example, during free play in the home corner, and snack and lunch times. Staff like to sit with children to encourage conversations and ideas from children. The older children are confident in expressing their thinking, for example, about what a combine harvester does on the farm. Children listen attentively and talk clearly in small groups generally, such as when they discuss where the 'beat baby' lives, and what house they should build for it. Children have regular opportunities to listen to stories and handle books, including visiting the school library on the same site. Staff also provide daily opportunities for children to recognise their names when they pick out their name tag for registration or for going to eat at the snack table. Children practise their emergent writing skills through tracing their own names, though they are not always encouraged to make mark as their name on their work. Staff use incidental opportunities to encourage children to 'write' for everyday purposes and learn that text has meaning, such as when they 'write' a letter to invite Pooh Bear to come boating with them.

Children are encouraged to practise counting during focused as well as spontaneous activities, for example, when they count the number of boys and girls at circle time, and develop the concepts of one or two more/less. Staff also extend children's mathematical language and concepts about size, shape and volume routinely. They talk about using how many large, medium and small bricks when they build their train tracks, and learn about 'more' and 'less' when weighing flour and sugar for making cakes. Children also take part in practical activities to develop their problem solving skills, such as when they make plans and measurements to design a wooden bird table for the garden. Staff are supportive and patient, and give children the time and space to process their thoughts, as well as equipment and materials to achieve their goals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The setting has a clear vision of placing each child at the centre of all its activities, and therefore cultivates strong working relationships with parents in order to meet individual children's needs effectively. Parents have a say in the running of the setting through participation on the parents committee which meet regularly. All parents feel welcome to drop in and talk to the staff or manager at any time. All children are each allocated a key worker, who befriends the parents and takes pride in fostering strong links with them. Their excellent rapport and close working partnership benefits children greatly because it helps them to settle easily through the good continuity of care. Babies' parents are particularly encouraged to supply their own drinks and foods, while children with on-going health conditions are cared for by vigilant staff applying very rigorous health and safety procedures.

Parents express great satisfaction with the information provided by the setting. Apart from a handbook, they can view easily informative notices, succinct policy statements, the weekly menus, and photographs of staff displayed on the walls, which help them to understand how their children are being cared for. Information regarding the Birth to three matters framework

is displayed clearly on the wall, and parents feel well updated about their children's progress, for example, through daily diaries (kept on babies only) and developmental records of their young children, which they can access easily in the group rooms. All children and families receive outstanding support, including those with special needs or requirements. Management and staff are pro-active in identifying what training is needed, and the relevant staff then attend such training in order to support the individual children's development. For example, children with language needs or delay make good progress through staff's one-to-one attention and specialist knowledge acquired through attending the relevant training purposefully.

Children benefit greatly from the setting's strong emphasis on personal, social and emotional development. Young children show great maturity and independence in self-care skills. They are extremely competent with the toileting and hand washing routines to protect themselves from germs. They demonstrate a very good awareness of their health and body, and understand the value and importance of foods such as vegetables and fruits in their diets. Children are highly versatile when changing into their outdoor Wellingtons, or when using serving spoons or tongs to serve themselves food at lunch and snack times. They are very eager to help staff with jobs around the nursery or after-school club, and are given great encouragement by staff who hand out job badges to promote a strong sense of responsibility. The older nursery children all want to help with fetching water from the water dispenser in the hallway. Staff encourage their self-esteem as well as good behaviour through a reward system in the form of stickers which are displayed on the wall. Children in the after-school club respond extremely well to the 'buddy' system, and are most helpful with not just practical tasks, but in helping the younger and newer children to settle. These school-age children play a full role in setting the club's ground rules, and staff are extremely successful in promoting children's self-regulation by following an easy-to-understand system of yellow/red cards as in football tournaments. All staff show very clear understanding of positive behaviour strategies, and children thrive on their clear and consistent boundaries. Children know exactly what is expected of them, and are very well behaved and well mannered because of staff's excellent role models. Staff thank children for being helpful to others, or being patient when waiting for their turn to play, so children follow their excellent role models. The extensive range of resources and daily activities keep children well stimulated and occupied, so they never feel bored or idle. Staff lavish praise and encouragement on children at every opportunity, which helps children to feel extremely valued and wanting to behave well.

Management and staff work to its comprehensive policies on equal opportunity effectively to treat all children, staff and families with respect and equal concern. Children's home life and cultural traditions are respected by staff, who also have a firm belief in fostering a strong sense of identity and community among children, staff and families. Children share the various excellent facilities of the Early Years Centre and adjacent school. Those children from the after-school club visit and comfort the elderly at the local care homes, thus developing their sense of identity within the local community. Parents also feel involved while enjoy the training, advisory and support services available on the same site. Strong links with local feeder schools also enhance the sense of community, for example, children's birthday is celebrated with a simple ceremony both at the nursery and alongside all the school children at the local school's special birthday assemblies.

Staff plan rich experiences for cultivating children's knowledge of diverse continents and cultures. Children at the after-school club have built friendships and connections with the children of a pre-school in Sri Lanka by becoming pen pals. Through the painstaking effort of staff, children at the after-school club have learnt a lot about Sri Lanka and how badly it was affected by the Tsunami, and what hardships it has caused these young children and their families because their government have to divert a lot of funds elsewhere to rebuild their country. The club's children and their parents support the staff's tireless effort in their good will gesture of fundraising to purchase school books and bags for the Sri Lankan children, who have since written back letters of appreciation to the after-school club children. The supervisor of the after-school club has been given an award by the local authority for promoting understanding and friendship between the children of the two countries and continents. Staff are enthusiastic in helping young children celebrate a wide range of festivals, such as Easter, Christmas, Diwali and Chinese New year. For example, they have lots of fun reading stories, dressing up, tasting noodles, and making impressive junk models of Chinese lions, while gaining an awareness of the wider world and their cultures. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents of children who receive funding for nursery education is good. Parents receive good information through meeting staff at joining, and through newsletters and notices about the Foundation Stage of learning for their pre-school children. New parents are also introduced to and become inspired by the child-centred approach of the nursery, which is presented to them vividly by film/slide shows and talks during a parents evening usually in autumn to co-incide with the new term. Parents also benefit from reading the many well illustrated colourful scrapbooks of children's past activities conveniently placed in the hallway. These give them an understanding of the rich and stimulating nursery experiences that help pre-school children work towards the early goals in the different areas of learning. As a result parents are able to copy or adapt some of these good practices and reinforce their children's learning. There are handouts to parents occasionally about special themes and activities, so they can be directly involved in their children's learning and development. For example, parents are asked to supply their own children's summer holiday photos and memorabilia in a shoe box to help children talk about themselves, and feel confident and settled when the new term starts.

New parents are requested to fill in a form to provide general information about their child's needs and preferences. Each key worker talks informally to new parents to gain a general understanding of individual children's development on entry. She/he relies mostly on her/his informal observations during the beginning of the first term, which are recorded to help form an initial picture of individual children's attainment. On a daily basis, parents have an easy view of a white board in the hallway displaying simple notes about the day's activities, allowing them to talk to their children about their nursery experiences. However, parents are less well informed about the staff's plans for the day/week in advance, which impacts partly on their involvement with their children's learning. Key workers are pro-active in sharing with parents their observations of individual children's daily activities and achievements, which ensures that parents are well updated about their children's development. Parents often reciprocate with their own observations, helping individual children's interests to be built on and their abilities further extended by staff. Parents can also sample at any time their own children's developmental records, which they can access easily from the play room, and be informed about their children's

progress towards the stepping stones or early goals. Parents and staff continue to work together to promote very positive outcomes in children's learning and development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children and parents experience a caring and friendly service. The charitable organisation which owns and runs the setting believes in not making a profit but ploughing back any financial gains to better the welfare of children and staff. It also takes pride in offering much needed childcare facilities to the local communities, and special support to families and children in need. There is good organisation of child-centred learning, which leads to very happy and well occupied children. They can make own choices and free flow between the extensive and stimulating resources and activities. This impacts on a high level of satisfaction and very good behaviour, as they are never bored or having to wait around.

Staff use their time well to talk to and support children, and work to appropriate staffing ratios at all times. Management deploy staff effectively for the various age groups, for example, they act quickly to cover absent staff to maintain staffing ratios and safety for walking and collecting after-school children. Management motivate and deploy key workers well so they feel a sense of responsibility, and take pride in meeting the needs of their key work children. They do this through close communication and liaison with parents, and work in close partnership to promote positive outcomes for their children. All required paper work is in place, and there are detailed policies and procedures to ensure the smooth running of the setting. Good records are kept of children generally, though certain age groups' attendance records are not easy to use for monitoring children's presence and safety.

Management have put in place good systems for recruiting, checking, inducting and appraising staff to ensure that children are safe and well cared for. Comprehensive checks are carried out on new staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. The staff team work very well together as 'one big family'. They look out for one another's charges from the different group rooms, and do extra hours during school holidays to fill the void left by the term-time only staff. Management show care and concern for all staff's general health and well-being, and have initiated a special keep-fit class for staff to exercise and relax together one evening a week after work. There is a mixture of experienced and more recently trained staff, who are highly motivated to further or update their training through in-house and external programmes. However, their training records lack up-to-date details for effective monitoring of their training needs. All staff are trained in first aid and food hygiene as required by Management, and there is a wide spectrum of skills within the staff team, enabling them to protect children and promoting their welfare effectively. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management is good. Management have a clear vision about placing each child at the centre of the setting's activities, and therefore devise effective staff training and development programmes to help achieve their child-centred approach. The company (a charitable organisation) which runs the setting has won the 'Investors in People' award twice within the last three years. This is to acknowledge their outstanding practice in investing their time and resources to develop the staff team and managers through a comprehensive induction

process and on-going training programmes. The four different childcare centres run by the same charitable organisation bring their staff together during two staff training days each year paid for by the company to promote team building and the sharing of good practices.

The setting manager and group manager lead by example and have recently enrolled on a Foundation Degree course in early childhood studies. They are committed to their task of continually developing the skills of the less experienced and less qualified staff, to ensure that the setting's ethos and methods are understood and implemented across the large staff team of the multiple provision. Staff feel confident with their way of planning child-led learning based on a flexible and spontaneous curriculum. The systems for recording children's assessments are still evolving, and as yet not fully effective in tracking individual children's progress across all areas of the curriculum. Managers endeavour to raise staff's awareness about good practices during regular staff meetings and informal mentoring. The whole staff team play a full role during staff meetings in reviewing their practices; they share ideas and discuss whether they need to adapt resources and activities to suit individual children's needs and development. Managers continually drop-in to observe, evaluate and monitor daily routines and activities to ensure that they work smoothly and meet the intended objectives. Staff appraisals are done formally each year, as well as informally during 'ten minute meetings'. The strong emphasis on staff development benefits children because staff use their improved skills to enrich the experiences for children. Management and staff are committed to continually review and evaluate their provision. They do this by reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses so as to further enhance the care and education for all children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the setting was asked to improve the safety of radiators, which have since been fitted with guards to prevent accidental injury such as burns for children. There was also a recommendation to improve the registration system, accident and medication procedures by providing necessary details. The setting has reviewed its practices and now includes accurate times in the records of medicines, which parents have to sign to acknowledge. The accident records now include more accurate details about the child involved, as well as the time of accidents. The registration system has since been reviewed, with the pre-school and the out-of-school club asking parents to provide their children's times of arrival and departure through a signing-in book. However, the setting now wants to review the system to achieve consistency across all age groups, and to provide clearer information about early departures and late arrivals, so as to form an up-to-date fire register for protecting children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 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.

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):

- update paper work such as staff training records, and further improve details of children's registers to ensure effective monitoring of children's presence within the setting.

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 systems for assessing children provide clear information to assist staff in monitoring their development across all areas of learning.

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