



Ellergreen Early Years Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY284604
Inspection date	25 July 2006
Inspector	Margaret Patricia Mellor
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Registered person	Ellergreen Early Years Centre Governing Body
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Ellergreen Early Years Centre Baby and Toddlers Unit was registered in 2004. It is an integral part of Ellergreen Early Years Centre, and run by the school, which is based in in the Ellergreen Community and Early Years Centre, in Norris Green, Liverpool. Children have sole use of three playrooms in the Unit and the two classrooms in the school are registered for day care. There is a secure fully enclosed garden for children's outdoor play. The setting primarily serves families who either live or work in and around the local community.

A maximum of 54 children may attend at any one time. They provide an all year round service on Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 18.00 hours. There are 30 children on roll aged from 11 months to three years. During term time children aged three and four years attend the maintained nursery school for the morning or afternoon session, but can also attend the 24 places for day care. They support children with English as a second language.

The Unit currently employs four staff to work with the children. All staff have a relevant early years qualification. A housekeeper is employed for preparing the children's meals and cleaning the premises. They receive support from the school's teaching staff and from Sure Start Services of Liverpool's Children's Services.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle is generally well fostered and encouraged. Staff follow effective procedures for managing children's dietary needs so parents' wishes are respected and children remain healthy. Younger children develop their coordination as they drink from their feeder type cup and all children have plenty of drinks when thirsty or after exercise. Children enjoy a variety of fresh or dried fruits at snack time. This increases children's awareness of a range of different tastes and textures. However, children's lunches are less wholesome, which means that healthy eating is not fully promoted.

Children's health is protected as there is a detailed sick child policy and staff act in their best interests when they are ill. Staff store medication in an accessible place out of children's reach. Two staff have a relevant first aid certificate and a fully stocked first aid box is kept close at hand so they can quickly respond to any minor injuries. Staff ensure that all children use sun creams and hats on hot days further safeguarding their welfare.

Children thrive because staff consistently follow health and hygiene procedures for nappy changing, wiping down surfaces and cleaning the toys. Every child has their own face cloth and towel, which further helps to prevent the spread of cross-infection and promote children's well-being. Younger children begin to learn simple personal hygiene through everyday routines and staffs gentle reminders to put nose tissues in the bin. They build on their awareness of being hygienic as they eagerly sing songs about how to brush their teeth and listen to stories about potty training.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities planned by staff that encourage them to be physically active. They benefit from fresh air and respond with gusto as they play outdoors. They love to push or ride on wheeled toys, hop, climb and jump. Indoors children's coordination and spatial awareness skills are further promoted through, such as soft play obstacle courses and movement to music. Babies' eagerness to be active is recognised and encouraged by staff as they help them to bear weight on their feet and take steps. All children are learning to listen to their bodies and are able to be active or restful according to their respective needs. They relish tactile and manipulative activities, which means children further develop their hand and eye coordination through fun, play and learning experiences.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, warm and well maintained environment. Cleaning systems are in place and organised to reduce disruption to children. Children gain independence as they

move freely and safely in the setting because staff vigilantly implement procedures when visitors and parents arrive. This is well supported by the door intercom system, vision panels, visitors records and effective procedures for the collection of children in an emergency. All the necessary safety equipment is in place and staff carry out a daily visual risk assessment of the premises to effectively address any areas of concern. The outdoor play area provides a variety of safe challenges for children in a secure enclosed area. This means that the risk of children accidentally injuring themselves is minimised.

Children develop a good awareness of safety through staff's gentle reminders not to run indoors and as they regularly practise what to do in the event of a fire. They build on their awareness of how to keep themselves safe through activities planned by staff. Children respond with gusto as they begin to learn about road safety through role play with props such as a zebra crossing and as they listen to stories. Children's well-being is further assured because staff have a strong understanding of child protection issues and the local procedures should they wish to report a concern. This is well supported by the detailed child protection policy.

Children develop their independence as they move freely and safely between the different areas within the setting because staff organise the space well. They have access to a generally good range of quality toys, which are colourful and suitable for their age while providing them with appropriate challenges. Staff follow appropriate health and safety procedures so that the resources are maintained well and children remain safe. Children's self esteem is promoted as they independently search out play materials that appeal to them from the tables, trays and toy boxes at child height. All children relax in comfort with their peers because the furniture is suitable for the range of children who attend.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are clearly relaxed and at ease in the setting, promoting their personal, social and emotional development. Their sense of belonging is fostered through consistent everyday routines, such as meals, snacks or quiet times. Children are gaining confidence as they build relationships with each other and staff who spend time talking, listening and playing with the children. They are becoming more confident communicators as they initiate conversations, use songs and rhymes and join in discussions at story time. Children have opportunities to join in and use the separate areas for play as they do puzzles, paint and play with the small world toys. They listen to stories and look at books, and sometimes recite numbers in songs or when playing. Children show a good awareness of how to behave and keep themselves healthy and safe.

Children have a good time in the setting because they are involved in a stimulating range of purposeful and fun, play opportunities, which actively engage their interests. This is supported by well planned activities as staff are beginning to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to develop their understanding of how young children progress and develop. Children are highly motivated and eagerly join in a wide range of creative activities, such as free painting at the easel and making models with play dough. They extend their imagination as they role play in the home area and dress up. They enjoy celebrating a range of festivals and different lifestyles.

Children begin to develop a strong sense of self as they imitate movements in the wall mirror and sing rhymes. Their physical skills are promoted by using wheeled toys, eating with spoons or their fingers at meal times and climbing on soft play. Children explore a wealth of media as they listen to music, run their fingers through the sand or water, play with bubbles and smell the fragrance balls in the treasure basket. Babies love the phonic toys and find a voice as they respond gleefully at hearing the different sounds. This further enhances children's self-esteem and early years experiences.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children attend the setting from different family backgrounds and play happily together, which helps them to develop their awareness of equality issues. They begin to build on their knowledge of the wider community as they play with the multicultural dolls, dress up, role play, do jigsaws and listen to stories. This is enhanced as they celebrate a range of festivals, such as Mothers Day, Diwali or Chinese New year when they make dragons with tissue paper. However, there are few positive image resources reflecting gender or disability, which means that children's understanding of different lifestyles is not fully extended.

Children are happy to attend the setting because they are familiar with the building and very comfortable with their easy and relaxed relationships with staff. This fosters children's sense of belonging. Children's art work and mark making is highly valued as it is widely displayed on the walls, promoting a welcoming environment for themselves and their parents.

Children's needs are met well because warm and friendly relationships have been established between the staff and parents and information is shared regularly. Parents are warmly greeted as they arrive and engage in easy conversation with the staff about their children's activities and interests. This reassures parents that children's interests come first. Parents say that they are very happy with their children's care, play, language development and safety. They are provided with an information pack about the activities as part of the enrolment procedure and a detailed notice helps to keep parents up to date with activities. This meaningful relationship between home and the setting positively contributes to children's continuity and the quality of care offered.

Children are settled and content in the setting. They respond warmly to staff who freely use praise and encouragement promoting a positive environment where children feel good about themselves. Staff are very attentive encouraging younger children to play with their toys and older children to express their interests about what they are doing. Children are busy and involved in their activities and as a result they behave very well. They show good awareness of simple behaviour expectations, such as putting tissues in the bin and washing their hands after painting. This means that children begin to understand what is expected of them. Children play harmoniously together as they learn to take turns and negotiate over the play materials in the home area.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe, comfortable and generally well equipped environment. They are well protected as staff ensure that non vetted persons are not allowed access to them. Well written policies and staff training, such as food hygiene and first aid work well in practice to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Most of the relevant daily documentation that helps to provide an effective service for the children is in place and maintained generally well. However, staff do not always follow procedures for recording the times children are on the premises and there are no complaints records should parents wish to report a concern.

Children benefit from the appropriate adult-child ratios and the experience of qualified staff. There are effective systems for the recruitment and induction of adults who care for the children. Staff show much enthusiasm about improving their knowledge through regular attendance on training courses, such as 'Birth to three matters', 'PEEP learning together programme' and 'Communication, language and literacy'. Children engage in purposeful activities, which are enhanced by the staff's knowledge of child development. Regular team meetings help staff to share ideas that further contributes to the quality of care offered.

Children are cared for in four age related groups and staff are developing their approach to key working to further ensure that children's experiences are happy and positive. Staff plan the activities well so that children enjoy fresh air and benefit from a balance of adult guided with independent play in a stimulating environment. Children are assisted to develop their independence and create friendships because staff have organised resources to meet the children's needs. Children have plenty of fun as they spontaneously pursue interests that appeal to them. Information is shared with parents regularly, promoting children's continuity of care.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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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 meals offered to children to increase healthy eating
- increase the range of resources that promote childrens understanding of equal opportunities
- review the procedures for recording the times children are on the premises
- devise and implement complaints records in line with new guidelines.

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