



First Class Childcare Centre Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	309306
Inspection date	05 September 2006
Inspector	Jannet Mary Richards
Setting Address	10 Cannon Street, Accrington, Lancashire, BB5 1NJ
Telephone number	01254 390 107
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Registered person	First Class Child Care Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

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

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

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

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

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

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cannon Street children's day nursery is one of the group of First Class Child Care centres and is situated in the centre of Accrington. The nursery is self-contained and comprises of a baby unit, pre-school rooms, a quiet room, tweenie room, art and craft and messy room. An undercover 'jungle' play area is provided and there is a secure enclosed outside play area at the rear.

Children attend throughout the year with the exception of bank holidays and the week

between Christmas and New Year. Opening hours are between 07.30 and 18.00 Monday to Friday. There are currently 90 children on roll, many of whom attend part-time sessions. Of these, 41 children are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a small number of children with additional needs and 10 children who have English as an additional language.

A full time qualified and experienced childcare manager is employed to head the staff team of 13. At the time of the inspection 11 of the staff team hold relevant childcare qualifications, with the remaining two staff undergoing training. There is a bank of qualified supply staff also available.

The setting is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted well within the nursery. There are effective procedures in place for reducing the risk of spread of infection. The staff follow hygienic procedures, wearing disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies, for example, and ensuring that the children wash their hands thoroughly before snacks and meals. Pictures in the children's bathrooms act as additional prompts to remind them to wash their hands. The staff take great care with babies' feeds, ensuring that they are heated to the correct temperature, are stored safely in a fridge and are clearly labelled with children's names. On the day of the inspection, however, the procedures for older children to access drinking water were not followed clearly, with too few cups available, resulting in some children sharing drinking cups. The children develop a good awareness of health issues as they learn about the importance of looking after their bodies through organised activities such as a visit from the dentist, or an outing to the local dental hospital. This is enhanced in the nursery as the staff ensure that children's dental hygiene is promoted through the 'Smiling for life' campaign.

The nursery menus fully support children's healthy growth and development. The children enjoy a wide range of very healthy and nutritious meals which are prepared using fresh ingredients only, and do not include processed foods. Snacks are also very healthy, with fresh fruit offered to the children daily. Mealtime is a social occasion when staff sit and eat with the children and encourage their independence and social skills. The staff work closely with parents to ensure that children's dietary needs are well met.

Outdoor play and use of the indoor 'jungle' play area provides the children with varied opportunities to develop a range of physical skills and enjoy fresh air and exercise every day. The staff plan a range of activities to develop their physical skills, such as balancing along a chalk line or throwing and catching balls.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery provides a very welcoming and child-centred environment. Children's own work is displayed attractively, making them feel valued and giving them a sense of belonging. The children are cared for in their own base rooms, and have the additional benefit from using other areas such as the 'jungle' and quiet rooms for different activities. In their base rooms the children can access their toys, books and other resources easily, giving them choices about what they do. The youngest children benefit from having lots of resources around such as mirrors and tactile objects and materials which stimulate their senses.

The nursery environment is generally very safe for children. There are clear and effective systems for identifying and minimising most risks to children, such as risk assessments and daily hazard checks. There are effective procedures such as regular fire drills, intercom listening systems and frequent checks for children who are sleeping, all of which help to keep the children safe. The staff supervise children very well to ensure their continued safety. At the time of the inspection, however, two areas were identified as potential hazards to children. The older children develop an awareness of safety when they help to make rules for safe play and behaviour, and when they engage in discussions about stranger danger and road safety.

The staff team have a good awareness of child protection procedures and issues in order to safeguard the welfare of any children they may care for.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle very well in the nursery due to effective admission procedures. Before they start attending the children visit with their parents and get to know their key worker in the nursery. In addition staff and parents work together to ensure that babies' familiar routines from home, such as meal and sleep times, are followed in the nursery which helps the children to feel safe and secure. There are effective procedures within the nursery to support the children transferring to other rooms as they grow older. They visit their new room with their key worker, who also prepares a report about the child to inform the workers in the new room.

Relationships between staff and children throughout the nursery are very good. The staff interact with the children at a level which is appropriate for their development, they are calm and caring in their approach and respond well to the children's interests, which helps the children develop confidence and enjoy the time they spend in the nursery. The staff are skilled at supporting the children in order to help them make progress in their development. They observe the children closely and then use this information to plan activities for each individual child. They observe a baby trying to pull himself to standing, for example, and encourage this, supporting him by holding his hands. Another child is observed to be a little timid, the key worker identifies activities she enjoys and spends individual time with her engaged in these activities until she develops the confidence to explore further.

The younger children under three years in the nursery enjoy a very wide range of

activities which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. Each day they are provided with a range of experiences which encourage them to explore and investigate. They can move around their play rooms and investigate the toys and books on offer, for example, or engage in exploring paint or shaving foam in the creative area. The staff use the Birth to three matters framework very well to plan and deliver a wide range of stimulating activities which contribute to the children being confident, settled and happy.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Children are making sound progress towards the early learning goals because they enjoy a wide range of interesting activities planned generally well to promote their learning in each of the six areas. The children are settled and happy in the nursery environment. They enjoy exploring play activities and making choices about what they do. They concentrate well and persist at activities which they choose themselves.

The children enjoy looking at and learning how to use books in the comfortable book area. They have fewer opportunities to develop their awareness that print carries meaning as there is limited written material in the play areas. The children have access to a good range of mark-making materials each day. They learn to recognise their names on their name cards at self-registration time and on their placemats at lunch time. Some of the older children are making good progress in writing their own names. The children develop their communication skills appropriately as they join in discussions at circle time and negotiate with each other as they play. Children who have English as an additional language are supported appropriately to develop their understanding and use of English.

The children benefit from exploring music through singing and access to percussion instruments regularly. They enjoy using their imagination in the role play area and when they play with small world toys. The children explore a suitable range of media and materials in the creative area, though currently do not access these materials independently to develop their creativity freely.

The children are developing their counting skills well, as they count often during play. They have few resources at the present time to develop their number recognition skills. They develop a sound awareness of shape, space and measure during activities such as matching shapes, jigsaws and making patterns with pegs and peg boards. They enjoy learning about the world around them when they go on outings to the library and post office, for example. They are beginning to develop an awareness of time through daily routines and discussions about the season, day and month. The children enjoy using technology such as the computer, and are learning how to use the mouse and varied programmes, with support from adults.

Indoor and outdoor play with a suitable range of equipment provides the children with opportunities to develop a range of physical skills such as balance, co-ordination and control. They develop fine motor skills well when they use tools such as pencils and scissors, and when they pour their own water from a small jug.

The staffing arrangements in the pre-school room have changed recently, the staff have not yet had sufficient time to establish clear routines or use the previously established systems for assessing children's progress. Whilst they are very enthusiastic and pro-active, some staff have not yet had training relating to the Foundation Stage which means that they are less confident in supporting and questioning the children to make them think and develop their play and learning ideas. This leads to frequent missed opportunities to extend the children's thinking in most areas of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children behave well in the nursery environment because the staff are positive in their interactions with them and they receive lots praise and encouragement. In addition the staff understand how to manage children's behaviour effectively. The older children are encouraged to contribute to making simple rules, such as sharing toys, in order that they understand what is acceptable behaviour within the nursery. The children learn to respect and value differences when they celebrate their own and other cultural festivals. This is supported by the range of books and toys they play with which reflect diversity and have positive images of different people. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is, therefore, appropriately fostered.

Children's individual needs are met well by the staff, who work closely with parents and carers and respect their wishes. Children with additional needs are well supported within the nursery as the staff have a sound awareness of strategies to support them.

Parents and staff communicate well in order to provide consistent care for the children, which contributes to them feeling settled and making good progress with their development. The staff and parents work together on issues such as toilet training, for example, ensuring that practices from home are followed in the nursery. At the end of each day the staff share information about the children with their parents and carers, both verbally and in the form of written diary sheets for the youngest children in the nursery. There is a wealth of very useful information displayed throughout the corridors in the nursery which keeps parents informed about the nursery policies and practices, along with additional useful information about issues such as health and hygiene.

Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of nursery education is good. There are clear and effective procedures for consulting with parents about the provision, in the form of regular questionnaires, for example. There are attractive displays and photographs of children which give parents an insight into how children learn through play in the Foundation Stage. In addition the parents are invited to develop their understanding of how to support the children to learn through play during organised parents evenings where they can discuss their child's progress and listen to a talk about the Foundation Stage. This good partnership contributes to the children's sound progress towards the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children benefit from the good organisation of the nursery. There are clear management structures in place and good levels of support for the staff team. Teamwork is good, overall, within the nursery as there are effective communication systems such as regular staff meetings, planning meetings and appraisals. Staff development is given good priority and staff attend training courses regularly to ensure that they have an up to date knowledge of child care issues. They use this knowledge very well in practice to influence how they care for the children on a daily basis.

The leadership and management of the nursery education are satisfactory. The provision is currently evaluated and monitored informally by the management team. They recognise that recent re-organisation of staff in the pre-school room has led to some inconsistencies in the organisation and delivery of the curriculum, as some staff have not had specific training to give them the confidence to support the children's learning. As a result they have rightly identified staff training relating to the Foundation Stage as an area for development. Good support systems are in place for the staff, such as regular appraisals, planning meetings and access to training which means that staff are able to develop their knowledge and skills appropriately over time.

The documentation relating to the care of the children is very well recorded. There are very thorough, rigorous policies and procedures which the staff use well in their day-to-day care of the children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the nursery was asked to ensure that all staff followed good hygiene practices in relation to the children's use of face cloths. Since the inspection the staff have agreed effective procedures for reducing the risk of spread of infection. In addition the practices are monitored by managers. As a result the hygiene practices in relation to using face cloths have improved and risk of spread of infection reduced.

Complaints since the last inspection

There is one complaint to report.

In March 2005 concerns were raised regarding safety, behaviour management and partnership with parents. The concerns were investigated, and the provider gave evidence that appropriate procedures were in place relating to the issues. The provider remains qualified for registration.

A record of this complaint has been documented in the nursery complaints log.

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):

- put more effective measures in place to minimise the risk of spread of infection when older children access fresh drinking water
- ensure children's continued safety by assessing the play area for hazardous plants and ensuring that there are no hazards in the sleep room at any time when children are present.

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):

- review the organisation of resources to provide children with more opportunities to freely explore media and materials, recognise numbers and letters and develop a stronger awareness that print carries meaning
- develop staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage in order to ensure a more consistent approach and confidence in delivering the curriculum and questioning the children to provide them with greater challenges.

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