



Hardmoor Early Years Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY319331 |
| Inspection date | 15 August 2006 |
| Inspector | Judith Reed |
| Setting Address | Hardmoor Early Years Centre, Leaside Way, Southampton, Hampshire, SO16 3EP |
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| Registered person | The Governing Body of Hardmoor Early Years Centre |
| 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?

Hardmoor Early Years Centre is a nursery school registered to include full day care, initially for children from the ages of two to five years. It is managed by Southampton City Council and a board of governors. A maximum of 140 children may attend the Centre at any one time. The centre is open from 08:00 to 18:00 for 48 weeks of the year. Children have access to four classrooms and a number of enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 67 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these 55 children receive funding for early education. Children may attend all day or

for a variety of sessions. The centre is able to provide support for children with special needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The whole of the school premises is used by children and includes the appropriate toilet and washing facilities. Children have access to a fully enclosed outside area and woods. All staff are appropriately qualified.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are healthy as they enjoy many opportunities for physical play. During the school holidays the day care children frequently use the outside play areas with fixed adventure climbing apparatus. They ride tricycles and scooters around the road system painted on the playground surface. Children throw balls into the basket ball net and push around prams. They use the interesting variety of musical instruments in the innovative, multi cultural, music play area. Children explore the wildlife found in the area and experience walks through the woodland area. When the pre school children are present children have free flow play activities inside and outside the classrooms. They freely move around the three classrooms and two outside play areas.

Children benefit from accessing a very clean and healthy environment. Children independently access the toilet facilities with hand basins at suitable height, soap and individual towels available. Children are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet, and before having snacks or meals. Nappies are changed in the toilet area and staff employ thorough hygiene procedures. Staff are trained in first aid and there are a number of first aid boxes available around the building. Children's medication is routinely stored in the medical room although this is not always immediately available when required. Staff have obtained emergency medical consent for each child and have suitable documentation to record administration of medication. Children's accidents are recorded on individual sheets and parents are kept informed at the end of the session. Younger children use the small sleep room to rest on day beds. Individual sheets are used for each child.

Children relish the variety of food offered throughout the day. The cook plans a varied and healthy menu including fresh fruit and vegetables each day. Children are offered cereal and milk, or juice, for breakfast if required. They enjoy fruit or bread sticks and cheese as a mid morning snack, with a choice of water or milk to drink. The cook prepares a hot cooked lunch for those who are staying during this period. A further healthy snack is offered during the afternoon and high tea is also available later in the afternoon. A menu is displayed to keep parents and carers informed. Staff are aware of children's food allergies and dietary requirements. Children are encouraged to try various fruits during food tasting activities. They experience strawberries, dates, kiwi, passion fruit, mango, pomegranate and Sharon fruit. Staff talk about the fruit and how it may be used in recipes, and what parts they can eat. Children are encouraged to pour their own drinks from large jugs during break times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe and protected in the very well organised and carefully planned environment. Children enter the building with their parents through doors with number pads and security locks. Staff ensure children are safe at all times. Children use three classrooms and two outside play areas throughout the day during term time. They flow inside and outside as they wish. During school holidays and later part of the day children use a room designated as the day care room, as well as one outside play area. All outside play areas and the wooded areas are fully fenced and secure for children. Children use toilet facilities within each base room. Children take part in regular fire evacuation drills. They learn to evacuate from a number of areas within the building. Staff record the fire drill and make a brief evaluation. A named health and safety officer is in place and regular risk assessments are carried out. Staff discuss health and safety during daily briefing as necessary, as well as weekly staff meetings.

Children freely access a comprehensive variety of high quality toys and equipment throughout the centre. Staff ensure all toys are suitable for those children attending and a regular programme of cleaning toys is in place. Children use low level tables and chairs throughout the building. They can use low level day beds if required for sleeping. Toys are stored in suitable low level storage rack and clear plastic boxes. Boxes are clearly labelled. Staff are able to change around toys from large store cupboards and provide further choice, as well as to extend children's learning.

Children are safeguarded by knowledgeable staff. All staff are aware of child protection procedures and would report concerns to named child protection officer. Staff are aware of their professional responsibilities regarding child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are busy and very well occupied throughout the day. They have built excellent relationships with the staff who enjoy spending time with children and sharing their experiences. Children particularly delight in spending time in the soft play room where they eagerly clamber up the musical steps and jump from the high platform into the ball pool. Children listen to gentle music which helps create a calm and restful atmosphere. Staff are very aware of children's individual feelings, as one child is distressed by the pictures of fireworks, so the disc is changed to show pictures of fish in an aquarium. Soft play items are brought into the classroom to enable children to experience physical play on the giant, soft play train. They dismantle the pieces of the train and build it again. During morning and afternoon sessions children are encouraged to join in planned activities, although they are also able to choose other activities around the room. Children complete puzzles and ask for assistance from staff when puzzles are more challenging. They observe their own eyes to record the colour and display coloured in templates on a wall chart. Several children choose to place paper on the easel for free painting. They understand that they need to wear a protective overall before commencing their art activity. Staff

praise children's efforts and remove the painting ready to be taken home, or displayed around the room. Children move into the home corner play area and place dolls into the cot or put the kettle on for a cup of tea. Children communicate well with each other and the staff. They offer pretend cups of tea to adults present. They copy a member of staff who is photographing activities, using an old camera from the home corner. The member of staff encourages the children to take photographs with the digital camera to print off on the computer later in the day. Children take many photographs and become familiar with the technology, instructing other adults how to do it. A group of children play co-operatively with the train set on the carpet. They move the engines around and create scenarios. Children help tidy away the train set before going outside to play. Later in the morning children join in play dough making activity and take turns in measuring flour, water, herbs and salt into the bowl. They also take turns in mixing and smelling the ingredients before a member of staff takes the dough to cook in the microwave. They mix dough with two different smells. Children sit quietly in a group and listen to a story before lunch is served. The member of staff uses a large scale book to enable all children to see the pictures clearly.

Children appreciate the frequent opportunities to play outside. They confidently run to the tricycles or cars and sit on them to propel themselves around the roads painted on the play ground surface. Some children enjoy the challenge of carefully taking the tricycles up a slope to roll quickly down again. They call for staff to watch them and repeat the exercise many times in an excited fashion. Children throw balls at a basket ball net or down another slope. Staff encourage the children to fetch the balls again to replace them in the container. Children spot acorns on the ground and show staff who explain about them falling from the trees. A member of staff spots a small grasshopper and calls the children to observe the tiny insect. They are fascinated in the sudden movements and mimic them by jumping around the play area. Children continue to explore the outside area and go into "Handa's House", a copy of the house from the familiar story. Children have helped to decorate this house by decorating wooden animals, which are placed around the outside. Children investigate the outdoor musical activity area while a member of staff is putting the instruments in place. A child helps to place the instruments around the area and distributes the batons also. Children quickly begin to blow through the didgeridoo, and enthusiastically hit the gong with the baton. They jingle the bells, and confidently show how to hit the end of the tubes with a flip flop to make different notes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated as individuals and staff get to know families through the home visits. Staff have a good understanding of equal opportunities and display a range of pictures showing children from around the world. They offer children a wide choice of toys and artefacts from other cultures including dressing up clothes, cooking implements, musical instruments, books, dolls, and small world figures. Signs around the building show other languages and writing.

Children with disabilities and learning difficulties are welcomed into the centre. Staff

ensure all children are safe and provide support when necessary. Suitable toilet facilities are available and all children can access the whole site.

Children behave very well and begin to understand the rules of the centre. They are praised and encouraged in their activities and staff make a point of saying "well done", "good work", and "good job" whenever possible. Children are busy and well occupied throughout their time at the centre. They help themselves to toys from storage and tidy away toys after they are finished with them. Staff are calm and encourage children to be calm and quiet also. They talk to children in a quiet manner. A behaviour management policy is in place.

Children benefit from the good relationship which is quickly established between parents and staff. Home visits prepare both parents and children for attending the centre. Parents state that they are happy with the care provided and they are confident in the day care staff. Staff share information verbally at the end of the session and do not provide written daily feedback. Parents are also kept informed about the centre through regular newsletters and staff are planning to hold information sessions for parents. Parents are familiar with the complaints procedure and a complaints record is available.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are protected as staff are employed and checked through the local authority. Thorough staff recruitment procedures are in place and the city council ensure all necessary employment checks are carried out. All staff are qualified to the appropriate level and necessary staff records are available if required. Office staff manage administrative duties and a caretaker and cook/housekeeper are also available.

Children move around freely in the very well organised environment. They are registered into the building on daily record sheets which clearly show times of arrival and departure. Children are aware of their own base rooms and younger children, as well as those attending before and after educational sessions, use the day care room. Staff make incidental recordings of observations of children's activities to build into a comprehensive record of development. They use well annotated photographs alongside these observations to show development through the Birth to three matters framework. Management ensure staff ratios are appropriate at all times. Staff move around and support the children well, promoting their enjoyment and experience at the centre. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Documentation is stored in a confidential manner. All necessary policies and procedures are in place and parents are briefly made aware of these during the home visit. Key workers visit children in their own home and complete some documentation with parents.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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

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 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):

- ensure medication is stored in a suitable place and is easily accessible when required
- continue to build on good relationship with parents and keep them informed about their children in writing.

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