



Milefield Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY306050
Inspection date	21 June 2006
Inspector	Sarah Gilpin
Setting Address	Milefield Primary School, Milefield Lane, Grimethorpe, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S72 7BH
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Registered person	BMBC
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Milefield Children's Centre opened in 2005 and operates from designated rooms within Milefield Primary School, in Grimethorpe, Barnsley. A maximum of 57 children may attend the centre at any one time, this includes 41 children in the full day care nursery and 16 children in the out of school care. The centre is open each weekday from 07.30 until 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 22 children aged from three months to under eight years on roll. Children receive funded nursery education in the adjacent school nursery. The

children attend for a variety of sessions and come from the local area. The centre has provision for children with special educational needs, and those children who speak English as an additional language.

The centre employs 11 staff, including the management and support staff. Most staff hold an appropriate early years qualification and others are on training programmes. Additional services are available for children and families who use the centre and these include; a baby group, a drop-in parent and carer group and an advice service with regard to job and training opportunities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and suitably maintained environment. Staff ensure that children's health is promoted because they implement the clear hygiene policies and procedures. For example, they clean tables before children eat and follow appropriate precautions when changing nappies. Children learn and follow good hygiene routines from staff and they are carefully monitored as they wash their hands before meal and snack times. There are clear systems for the recording of accidents involving children in the centre and these are routinely shared with parents.

The children enjoy the varied range of healthy snacks and meals provided for them and independently choose from foods, such as fresh fruit. Staff ensure that children develop their independence as they eat by chopping up their food into manageable pieces. Parents are asked about their children's likes, dislikes and any food allergies or requirements and as a result the foods provided meet the children's individual and religious dietary needs. Social meal times are enjoyed by the children who are learning to sit together and share their news with their friends and staff.

There are daily opportunities for children to benefit from fresh air and exercise as they play in the secure school play area. Staff support the children as they learn and develop new skills, for example, they play football with the children helping them develop their kicking skills. The children enjoy frequent opportunities to explore the large indoor soft play area where they climb and bounce on the available equipment. The children's own routines for rest and sleep are accommodated well by staff. For example, when children are tired they are comforted as they drop off to sleep at a time that fits with the children's own routines.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure and safe environment. Staff use risk assessments to identify and minimise potential hazards and continual supervision of the children to keep them safe. The majority of the policies and procedures are in place and implemented by staff to promote the safety of the children. For example, a record of visitors to the building is kept. The children are beginning to understand how to keep

themselves and their friends safe through the skilful interventions of staff, for example, when children run around inside, they are reminded to take care. However, the designated outdoor play area is uneven and poses a hazard to the children. All children are currently sharing use of the large play room because the designated under two's area is limited by adults who access the kitchen facilities. In addition, the area lacks suitable flooring for messy play activities and does not have natural lighting.

The varied range of resources, toys and equipment used by the children are safe. Low level storage and small tables ensure that even the youngest children can safely access all areas and activities. The equipment and resources are of good quality and meet the required safety standard. The arrangement of the furniture provides children with a large space in which to play and bays, such as the creative area, ensure that children move around and have varied experiences.

Children are safeguarded because staff understand their role in child protection, however, the policy for dealing with child protection does not clearly contain all the required elements to enable staff to act in the best interests of the children in the setting. There is a clear system for vetting staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children thoroughly enjoy their time in the setting. Staff work directly with the children and effectively support their play and learning. Children's attendance patterns are varied and staff take this into account and provide fun and enjoyable activities and experiences. For example, children enjoy playing in the water, pouring and making lots of bubbles and singing along to the music they make when using the vast array of musical instruments. Children are able to choose for themselves from the resources that are attractively arranged at their level. They show great interest in the marble run, which they put together with the help of staff. Staff have a good understanding of child development and are aware of what the children enjoy playing with. The children are learning to become confident and engage the adults in conversation, discussing their recent holidays. Children enjoy listening to stories on a one to one basis with staff in the cosy story area. However, staff currently do not plan for children's learning and do not use assessment of what the children know and can do to help progress their learning.

Children thrive in the warm and affectionate care of the adults. Staff quickly get to know the children, sensitively settle them to an activity when they find leaving their parents difficult and work hard to introduce new children to the environment and the range of activities provided. Babies receive lots of cuddles from the staff and as a result are happy and well settled and they learn social skills as they sit together with the staff to enjoy meals and snacks.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by staff who work with parents to meet their individual needs. They are successfully encouraged to operate independently in the setting, for example, as they choose for themselves from the varied range of resources. There is a suitable range of toys and equipment to promote children's awareness of the world around them and other people. The building design and carefully selected resources successfully promote access for all children including those with special needs.

Children behave well and staff work closely with them, successfully managing their behaviour using positive reinforcement and praise to deal with the limited unwanted behaviour. The warm and affectionate relationships between the children and the staff means that children feel secure and comfortable. The children seek staff out to play with chosen activities, for example, to join in the water play, to read a book and build the marble run.

There is a successful partnership with parents. Information is shared carefully using written and verbal communications. Parents have access to the setting's policies and procedures to ensure they are informed about the provision for their children. Easy-going verbal exchanges between staff and parents, and the daily diary sheets ensures that parents know about the day's events and their children's achievements.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The children are cared for in a setting that is well organised to ensure their individual needs are met. For example, the routine is planned to optimise the children's free play opportunities and to provide social meal times. Children are supported well as they play because the staff know the children well.

Most of the required policies and procedures are in place to support staff in promoting children's health, enjoyment, achievement and their ability to make a positive contribution. There are clear recruitment and vetting procedures, which ensure that staff are suitable to work with the children. Frequent training and development opportunities for all staff ensure they are up to date with current practice and thinking. As a result, the children are cared for by staff who have a good knowledge of child development and effectively support their care and learning.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- improve the child protection procedure to ensure it clearly includes all the required elements
- develop the planning and assessment system to ensure that the children's individual developmental needs are met
- develop the area for the children under two years to ensure they can enjoy messy play and benefit from natural light
- improve the opportunities children have for outdoor physical play.

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