



## **Puffins at Clystheath**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY300223
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 September 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Anne Legge
<b>Setting Address</b>	Woodwater Lane, Clyst Heath, Exeter, Devon, EX2 7EY
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<b>Registered person</b>	Puffins of Exeter Limited
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Puffins at Clystheath is one of eight day nurseries run by Puffins of Exeter Limited. The company was established in 1990 by two partners who are based at the head office in the city centre. The nursery is situated in a converted chapel within the Clystheath housing development on the outskirts of Exeter. The premises offer two separate entrance lobbies leading into the large chapel. This is divided into segregated play areas for four age-groups. There are children's toilets, staff facilities,

a sleep room and two separate kitchens. The children have use of an outdoor play area set within the chapel grounds.

The nursery is registered to provide care for 60 children under five years of age, and there are currently 91 children on roll, including 29 funded three and four-year-olds. Children with learning difficulties or with English as an additional language are welcomed and supported.

The Nursery is open from 07:30 to 18:00 on weekdays throughout the year. There are 19 child care staff, of whom 15 have appropriate child care qualifications. The remaining four staff members are working towards qualifications. The company has achieved Investors in People status.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children benefit from eating a good variety of nutritious foods. They enjoy cereal and fruit for breakfast and freshly cooked meals, using organic ingredients, at lunchtime. Morning and afternoon snacks include fresh and dried fruit, and foods which are mainly low in sugar and fat. Staff further promote healthy eating, by offering parents the opportunity to buy bags of fruit, for children's snacks, on leaving the nursery. All special dietary needs are known and carefully met, through effective systems, which keep all staff informed. Children have plenty of fluids, as drinking water is freely available to the older children, and staff ensure that very young children drink regularly. Children have daily opportunities to be physically active. Indoors, they play energetic singing games, involving dancing, jumping or bouncing. Outdoors, they use wheeled toys, play running games, or balance on beams, developing their fitness and skills.

Children are well protected from infection, due to good hygiene procedures, throughout the nursery. Staff have a clear understanding of the need to keep all surfaces clean, especially before food is served. They use table cloths and anti-bacterial sprays, and ensure that floors are cleaned appropriately. Staff are meticulous in keeping their own hands clean, and constantly carry and use a cleansing gel. Children learn good hygiene routines from an early age, using warm flannels to wash their hands at the table, or washing appropriately in the bathroom. Nappy changing procedures are hygienic, as staff wear aprons and gloves, and dispose of used nappies carefully. Bathrooms are checked regularly for cleanliness. Children receive good care when they are unwell or injured. At least two staff members in each age-group have current First Aid qualifications and all records of accidents and medication are comprehensive.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean, comfortable and welcoming environment, where the indoor space is used very effectively to meet their needs. The four play areas are separated by wooden gates and barriers, and are all made attractive for children, through the good use of soft furnishings and displays. Children's security is given a high priority and doors are securely locked during sessions. Flashing lights indicate when doors are open, so that staff can be vigilant and monitor access. Children choose from a good variety of toys and resources, most of which are in good condition. There are appropriate systems for regularly checking equipment for safety, but this is not always effective, as outdoor play equipment is occasionally used without being rigorously checked.

Children are safe indoors, as staff risk assess all activities and areas of the building, addressing any hazards which are noted. They are mainly safe in the outdoor area, and the recent instalment of new fencing has improved their safety. However, children of different ages share this area and younger children are not consistently well supervised, when older children use wheeled toys, close to where they play.

Children are safe in emergencies, as evacuation procedures are practised regularly and fire safety equipment is checked routinely, including weekly testing of the alarm. Children learn to be aware of issues relating to their own safety, as they use puppets to discuss road safety and learn how to respond to strangers. They are well protected from abuse or neglect, due the staff's good understanding of all child protection issues and procedures, and the company's clear systems. However, the child protection policy lacks some important details.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children choose freely from a wide range of appropriate activities, using very good resources, which effectively promotes their development. Babies enjoy plenty of sensory play, exploring a wide variety of materials, such as wooden, plastic, fabric and metal items. They respond to the warm and sensitive interactions of staff, which foster their sense of belonging and help to develop their communication skills. Toddlers are constantly engaged in interesting activities, such as building with large bricks, exploring materials or joining in with action songs. Staff encourage them to be imaginative, such as when playing a 'peek-a-boo' game, and effectively support their learning, as they sing counting songs or help children to draw with wax crayons. Two-year-olds make good progress, as they investigate pieces of ice, filled with glitter and plastic items, or sing and clap enthusiastically, in adult-led sessions. They enjoy making marks, using chalk outdoors or pencils indoors. Staff skilfully encourage them to try different activities, and children grow in confidence as they learn new skills.

Children benefit from the calm and purposeful atmosphere, which pervades the whole nursery, allowing them to develop in a relaxed and supportive environment. Staff caring for the youngest children have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and plan successfully for their development in all areas. Children's individual needs are met, as key workers track their progress and plan suitable activities, to move them to the next stage. Assessment records are detailed

and relevant, including photographs and targets for future progress, which are shared regularly with parents, so that they are able to further support their child's development.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children have access to a wide range of activities, covering the whole curriculum. They choose freely and independently between tasks and resources, but systems do not effectively monitor their choices and progress, to ensure that they experience all areas of learning regularly. Time is not always organised effectively, so that all children access a broad and balanced range of play experiences, within each session. This limits children's progress, as some choose only physical and sensory play. Senior staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and use questions and discussion skilfully, to promote children's development. However, this is not consistent, and some children are not regularly challenged or supported in their learning. For example, in a craft activity, able children are left to experiment, with no adult encouragement to try different techniques or materials, and a very young child is not supported when she lacks the skills to complete the task.

Children concentrate well at their chosen activities, and in whole-group sessions, such as story time, when staff help them to explore rhymes and discuss plots. They choose to share stories with each other, as well as regularly taking books home. They sometimes write for different purposes, such as in their creative work, and begin to write their names. They learn about letter shapes and sounds, discussing them in small groups and singing alphabet songs in large groups, although this is not consistently developed in daily tasks. Children count in daily routines, such as when helping to set the table for lunch. They use mathematical language in their play, comparing quantities of sand or water used. They match numerals to groups of objects, such as dots, but able children are not consistently extended into comparing groups or discussing one more or less.

Children make very good progress when exploring sand and water, due to the excellent intervention of one member of staff, to question them and extend their thinking. They learn about the natural world, as they look for insects, in the outdoor area. They use a computer, improving their mouse and keyboard skills, as their understanding of technology increases. Children develop lively imaginations, as they role play a hospital scene, effectively supported by staff. They create freely, using a good variety of collage resources, and modelling materials. Children develop good control as they use small equipment, such as scissors and glue spreaders, and large equipment, such as tricycles. They learn about their own bodies, as they discuss healthy foods in their role play.

## Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They respond to the calm and positive approach of staff, throughout the nursery, and treat each other with respect. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They willingly share resources

and take turns, due to the staff's sensitive interventions. For example, two toddlers are skilfully helped to share a hoop and praised when they succeed. Children discuss feelings and behaviour, using dolls and puppets, and they explore different beliefs, as they celebrate a range of festivals. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are included and supported, as are those with English as an additional language. Families from other countries are invited to share aspects of their culture, to help children learn about diversity. Key workers are effective in supporting children's individual interests, when planning activities.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children have consistent care, due to the effective systems used by the nursery, to communicate with parents. Good information is provided for carers, when children first attend, including details of policies and procedures. There are excellent settling-in procedures, including home visits by key workers and a series of optional visits to the nursery, for the parent and child. All planning is displayed, and parents have regular access to children's development records, and are encouraged to contribute to them. Newsletters and regular parent meetings provide further information for parents, so that they are able to fully support their child's development.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children enjoy the facilities of a comfortable, well-equipped nursery, where space and resources are used effectively, to meet their needs. They are cared for by well-qualified staff, who are enthusiastic, relate easily to children and usually work successfully as a team. The company is committed to developing the skills of all of its staff, through appropriate training and sharing of good practice. Ratios are good, so children usually enjoy plenty of individual attention. There are good systems to ensure that children are protected from infection, and safety standards are satisfactory. The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The manager and senior management team monitor the quality of Nursery Education provided. They regularly appraise staff and are aware of the strengths and weaknesses within the Foundation Stage. There are plans to address training needs and to continue to improve assessment and planning systems, so that children's progress will accelerate. Children's care is underpinned by all the required documentation, although some is not up-to-date. The child protection policy lacks details of procedures to be followed, in the event of an allegation being made against a staff member, and the complaints procedure does not accurately reflect current systems.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints 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.

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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 children's safety, by continuing to develop risk assessment systems, to ensure that children use outdoor equipment without risk of harm to themselves or others
- make sure that children's care is always underpinned by current and comprehensive documentation, including an up-to-date complaints procedure and adequately detailed child protection policy.

### **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):

- improve the organisation of time within sessions, so that children always enjoy a wide variety of learning experiences, and consistently make good progress in all areas of learning
- continue to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, so that children of different abilities are consistently challenged and supported in their learning.

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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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)