



Maden Early Years and Childcare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY320571
Inspection date	01 August 2006
Inspector	Annette Stanger
Setting Address	The Maden Centre, Rochdale Road, Bacup, Lancashire, OL13 9NZ
Telephone number	01706 871740
E-mail	
Registered person	Maden Early Years and Child Care Centre
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School care, Crèche

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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Maden Early Years and Childcare Centre is managed by a committee. It first opened in 2004 and is situated on the main road in Bacup, Lancashire. The centre is multi-functional and provides support for parents and carers and as well as the registered provision it provides a number of drop-in support groups and training courses.

A maximum of 77 children from birth to 8 years may attend the provision at any one

time. The building is divided into separate areas for specific ages and all children have access to two outdoor areas and an outdoor sheltered area. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. There are currently 84 children under five years on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for early education. The holiday club is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 during all school holidays. There are currently 20 children on roll. The out of school club is open each weekday from 08.00 to 09.00 and then from 15.30 to 18.00 during term time only. The crèche is open each weekday between 09.00 and 15.00. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The centre supports a number of children with special needs.

The provision includes a team of 20 staff. Of these, 19 hold appropriate early years or play work qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy as they are cared for in a very clean and hygienically maintained environment. Most age groups successfully learn the importance of personal hygiene, through good levels of staff support, timely discussions and effective daily routines. However, the absence of pump soap and paper towels in the morning within one of the nursery rooms, having not been replenished, has a direct impact on personal hygiene for these children. This is because it does not support them in developing their awareness of good hygiene practice and healthy living. There are good arrangements in place to care for children who become ill, acting in the child's best interests and significantly reducing the risk of cross infection. Staff are also trained in administering first aid and pay good attention to continually updating this knowledge to protect children's health.

Children are well nourished and enjoy healthy and nutritionally balanced snacks, which are freshly prepared and successfully contribute to their well-being, healthy growth and development. Staff actively seek information regarding children's health and dietary needs, and any cultural preferences. These individual requirements are respected and followed to safeguard children and accommodate their needs. Menus are produced and shared with parents to keep them well informed about meal choices. Staff successfully promote children's understanding of healthy eating through regular discussion at snack times and enjoyable activities. For example, children enjoy vegetable printing and tasting activities, encouraging them to explore texture and the taste of different fruits. These contribute towards the children's understanding of the importance of healthy eating and also models their appreciation and enjoyment of food. Water coolers within nursery rooms mean children can easily accommodate their thirst. Through discussion, staff explain to the children the importance of drinking plenty of water especially in hot weather and after exercise.

Children take part in regular physical play which helps them to make very good progress in their physical development. Younger children are well supported by staff as they assist children in gaining increasing control of their bodies and give them the

confidence to try new experiences. Older children are successfully encouraged by staff to do fastenings on their coats when going to play outside and children's coordination and balancing skills are developing well as they practise these both indoors and out. For example, children balance on seesaws, climb on fixed equipment, skilfully manoeuvre pushchairs around obstacles and play games of chase, whilst successfully avoiding others.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a mostly secure and welcoming environment. Security measures include a keypad entry system and high handles on nursery doors. Children have free access to a varied range of toys and equipment that are of very good quality. These are organised effectively to ensure children can safely self-select from low-level storage while being well supervised. Risk assessments are in place, however, they are not entirely successful in identifying and minimising all potential hazards in the holiday club, for example, where plug sockets have not been replaced and chairs are stacked high. This compromises the children safety of these children.

Children independently explore and select play opportunities from a broad range of toys and resources that are safe and of very good quality. A good ratio of adults to children, along with effective deployment, ensures that children are well cared for and protected. Staff are constantly alert to teaching children how to keep themselves safe and use clear explanation to help them understand the possible consequences of their actions. For example, children are reminded to sit on chairs properly in case they fall off and not to throw sand as it could go in their eyes and hurt them. Children also learn about fire safety through practising regular fire drills with staff. This raises their awareness and encourages them to share some responsibility for their own well-being.

Staff have a good understanding of how to safeguard children to protect their welfare. A good number of staff hold a first aid qualification and a secure understanding is held of their roles and responsibilities in line with local authority child protection procedures. These measures contribute to keeping children safe and mean that staff can act appropriately and in the child's best interests.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children in all age groups are confident and display very high levels of self-esteem. This is largely due to the actions of the staff who evidently know the children well. Interaction is effective, staff praise children regularly, listen to what they are saying and value their contributions. This results in good, warm and caring relationships and children that are very happy and settled.

Children enter the setting confidently and quickly settle into the familiar routine. They use their initiative well, selecting their own resources and experiences as well as

participating in planned activities. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is used effectively to plan a good range of activities which further their development. Babies and toddlers are welcomed into the nursery by warm, friendly staff that actively listen and respond enthusiastically to their sounds, body language and facial expressions. Young children's creative development is well supported and they enjoy a range of sensory and exploratory experiences. For example, during sand and water play, playing with shredded paper and shaving foam.

Children who attend the holiday club enjoy activities which are based on their own interests. They enjoy self selecting their own experiences from the free range options available and this helps to develop their decision making skills. Good use is made of both the indoor and outdoor environments and staff respond well to the children as they listen to their ideas and suggestions and value their input. Activities on the day of inspection include portrait painting, baking jam tarts, using the internet kiosk, playing football, board games and visiting places of interest.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals because staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. This ensures that sessions are planned effectively to include a good balance of activities, whilst their clear knowledge of individual children enables appropriate challenges to be incorporated into the curriculum. Staff are very good at communicating with children and use effective questioning techniques to successfully stimulate thinking and extend knowledge.

Children are highly motivated and eagerly participate in activities of their own choosing, such as construction, imaginative and creative activities. Behaviour is good; children are polite, well mannered and demonstrate a clear awareness of boundaries within the nursery. Children's communication skills are developing well. They are confident in their interactions and they talk with enthusiasm about what they are doing and what they are going to do. They are very proud of their achievements and seek out staff to share examples of their pictures and creations. Many of the children are confident speakers and have a developing vocabulary as they use words, such as 'propeller' and 'galloping' during their play. They regularly ascribe meanings to their marks and talk with increasing confidence about their paintings, drawings and items they have constructed. Writing materials are included as part of the continuous provision and children make very good use of these during their play situations. For example, children enjoy writing their own stories and make meaningful marks as they pretend to take the register. This maximises opportunities for children to write for a variety of purposes in everyday play situations and develops their confidence.

Children count confidently and show increasing skill in using and recognising numbers in their play. For example, children correctly identify numbers at random up to 10 on 'Fizzie's First Numbers' software on the SMART Board Technology. They are clearly very familiar with using such technology and do so with confidence and great skill, displaying excellent mouse control. Children also have a good awareness of shape and demonstrate this as they use their fingers to draw different shapes in the shaving foam.

Children regularly talk about what is seen and what is happening and show great interest in discovering how things work. For example, children cooperate well as a team using wooden planks and a hose to make a waterfall, discussing and adapting their ideas as they go along. Children enjoy exploratory and sensory activities, such as sand, water, play dough and shaving foam play. They self-select different materials for collage and free creativity, although there are fewer opportunities for children to use natural materials for free creativity. Children construct with a purpose in mind and use their imaginations well in their creativity. They describe their creations in detail and use tools safely and skilfully for a range of purposes. For example, a child selects a hole punch as she considers putting her picture in her file and then changes her mind and chooses the sellotape as she takes the decision to stick her picture up on the wall for all to see.

Children enjoy attending weekly dance and movement sessions where they explore moving in a range of ways. However, opportunities for them to explore the different sounds of a range of musical instruments are less frequent. They competently use a wide range of tools which require hand-eye coordination. They demonstrate good physical skill and control when moulding and manipulating dough and show increasing control over clothing and fastenings which develops their independence skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff promote an inclusive provision and all children are positively welcomed and their individual needs catered for. Children with special needs are well supported through good partnerships with parents, initial home visits, individual care plans and good staffing arrangements, which are designed to meet the individual needs of the children. Children benefit from activities and resources which help them to value diversity. They learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through well planned activities and accessing resources, which reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. An example of this involved children making clay tea light pots for the Diwali celebrations.

Children's behaviour is very good in response to the staff's positive and consistent approach to behaviour management. Staff regularly praise children and take time to acknowledge good behaviour. Consistent boundaries are set and staff support younger children in sharing and turn taking and encourage older children to take responsibility for their own behaviour. For example, children are learning to negotiate and resolve their own disputes and use egg timers to assist them in taking turns on popular activities. As a result, children have a good understanding of right and wrong and show great care for their environment, the resources and one another. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents are welcomed into the nursery by an informative entrance area, with a wide variety of information displayed regarding the provision. Detailed information regarding the service provided for parents is presented in a parents' file and contains information on policies and procedures and the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

However, the complaints procedure and system of recording is not entirely compliant with new requirements. Regular newsletters keep them up to date with the latest developments at the provision and daily verbal feedback keeps them well informed of the progress their child is making. Planning is displayed within each room and parents have easy access to their child's individual file, which they can discuss with their child's key worker. These successful partnerships with parents contribute significantly to children's development and promote continuity of care. Staff actively seek parents' views about their children's needs and interests before they start and on a regular basis throughout their time in the setting. For example, through the completion of initial child records and the 'All about me' document. This two-way sharing of information and expertise allows staff to continually meet the children's ever-changing needs and keeps both parties well informed. Children clearly benefit from this successful partnership and settle well in response which enhances their experience and makes it a positive one.

The partnership with parents in relation to nursery education is good. Children's individual records of achievement are compiled, providing parents with a clear picture of their child's progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Parents are also given the opportunity to attend parents' evenings where they can have a fuller discussion about their child's progress. Parents are well informed about the Foundation Stage through informative booklets and they are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning. For example, parents are provided with handy tips in the Foundation Stage booklets and under each area of learning it shows ways in which they can extend and enhance the learning that takes place in the provision.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The well organised and welcoming environment contributes to children's good levels of independence and actively increases their confidence as they initiate their own play and learning. The activities and equipment are attractively presented in clearly defined areas and at a level which children can freely and safely select from. The environment, both indoors and out, is organised flexibly and creatively so children can choose to access areas which interest them. Effective deployment of staff ensures children receive good levels of support; staff know the children well and work well as a team and in the children's best interests.

Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that children are well protected and cared for by qualified staff with good knowledge and understanding of child development. Induction procedures are thorough and ensure that staff have a good awareness of expected practice. Regular staff appraisals and monitoring systems are used effectively to ascertain continued suitability. All of the required documentation is in place and includes the necessary detail, with the exception of the procedure for recording complaints.

The leadership and management is good. There is an extremely high level of commitment from staff and very successful working relationships. Management support staff well and actively encourage them to attend ongoing training, which in

turn benefits the children and the provision. All staff have a high regard for the well-being of the children and ensure that policies and procedures work well in practice. The provision is proactive in identifying their own areas for development through the use of parental questionnaires, seeking support from the local authority, qualified teacher input and quality assurance schemes. This demonstrates a strong willingness to continually improve and has a positive impact on the care, learning and play provided.

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 complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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 good.

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 hand washing facilities are always available to support children's awareness of the importance of basic hygiene
- ensure daily risk assessments are effective in minimising all potential hazards
- ensure the system for recording complaints is in line with the latest revised criteria dated October 2005.

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):

- continue to improve the accessibility of natural resources and materials for children's free creativity
- continue to improve the opportunities for children to explore the different sounds of a range of musical instruments.

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