



The Coleridge Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY330167
Inspection date	13 September 2006
Inspector	Lindsey Pollock
Setting Address	Ribble Drive, Darlington, County Durham, DL1 5TY
Telephone number	01325 353416
E-mail	
Registered person	Skerne Park Community Enterprise Association
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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?

The Coleridge Centre was registered in February 2006. It operates from five rooms and the associated facilities of the centre. It is registered to provide care for a total of 130 children in the full day care facility, crèche facility and out of school provision. The full day care facility opens each weekday from 08.00 until 18.00. The out of school care is provided from 15.00 to 18.00 during term time and from 08.00 to 18.00 during school holidays. The crèche runs as needed to provide care for children whose parents are accessing courses within the centre. There are secure outdoor play areas for each provision.

There are currently 47 children aged from 16 months to under eight years on roll. Older children also attend the after school and holiday facility. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. Procedures are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The setting employs 10 members of staff including the manager. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from illness and infection as staff follow stringent hygiene routines. All areas are very clean and staff implement effective procedures for nappy changing and toileting children. Children are reminded constantly about the importance of good hygiene practice and are moving towards independence in attending to their personal care. For example, they discuss the importance of washing hands before they eat and older children know to use soap 'to get the germs off'. Arrangements for first aid, administering medication and strict implementation of the sickness policy fully protects children.

Children enjoy outdoor play at frequent times throughout the day. This contributes to their overall good health. They negotiate the balancing equipment safely, scramble through the tunnel and thoroughly enjoy running around in the large outdoor area. Staff use the 'Top Start' programme to promote children's physical development and to help them begin to understand how exercise is good for their bodies. They enjoy music and movement sessions and have made a 'disco ball' to dance underneath. Children attending after school and during the holidays have use of the large school hall and sports facilities of the school.

Staff have detailed information about children's individual health and dietary needs. Children enjoy a wide variety of nutritious snacks and meals which are prepared using fresh ingredients wherever possible. A buffet style breakfast allows children to select from a range of healthy cereals and fruit. This helps to raise their awareness of the importance of healthy eating. Meal times are a sociable experience; staff sit with children and support where necessary. Attractive tablecloths give a homely feeling and children are relaxed, happy and certainly enjoy their food. Children who attend after school and during the holidays are involved in menu planning. Staff plan food tasting activities to encourage the children to try different foods, such as exotic fruits. They include the children where possible in food preparation so they gain knowledge of healthy ingredients.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and very secure environment. The premises are monitored to ensure that children are not at risk from unauthorised adults.

Identification is checked both at the entrance to the centre itself and before entering the nursery area. A strict signing in and out system for all visitors is operated. The environment is very welcoming to children and families. It is brightly decorated to a high standard with attractive displays of children's work and information for parents. Space is used well to meet all children's needs. All resources are maintained to an excellent standard and very well presented at low level or on the floor. This ensures that children can easily access them and develop their growing independence. The play environment allows children to move around freely, safely developing their own play ideas. Equipment is also of high quality, appropriate for the different age groups and regularly checked for safety and cleanliness. Sturdy furniture is provided to help young children develop their walking skills.

Staff recognise that children's safety is paramount. They monitor the premises daily and take appropriate steps to minimise risks, for example, they are unable to access electrical socket covers or sharp objects. However, staff have not assessed the potential risk to children from the cords on the vertical blinds or from drinking from unnamed drinking cups in the baby area. Children are learning to keep themselves safe as staff involve them in discussions and teach them safe practice such as how to handle scissors correctly and how to move around the nursery safely. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised regularly to raise staff and children's awareness of what to do should an incident occur. They are encouraged to tidy away toys as they finish with them to keep the areas free from clutter. Their awareness of road safety is developing through role play activities using crossing patrol props.

Children are well protected because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. The designated person for child protection is experienced and confident in her role.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the provision. They have developed warm relationships with their key workers and other staff, this promotes their ability to learn and their sense of belonging. They separate confidently from their parents and are keen to begin playing when they arrive. All children including the babies make choices about their play, independently selecting activities from the balanced range available. Their independence is developing well as they feed themselves, use the toilet and put on coats to go outside. Children confidently use the whole environment and explore activities freely. They love being outside and enjoy the freedom and space to run around and play in the fresh air. Their individual routines for sleeping, feeding and nappy changing are followed closely to help promote their welfare and make them feel secure.

Staff caring for children under three are beginning to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework successfully to support children in their earliest years. Records of achievement are linked to the aspects of the framework and allow staff to plan activities that meet the individual needs of the children. Children enjoy various sensory experiences, such as treasure baskets and natural materials, such as sand,

water and clay which they explore enthusiastically. They concentrate extremely well and show great excitement and curiosity, for example, when they join with the school nursery children to participate in a Zoo-Lab visit. Staff use the foundation stage guidance to plan a range of exciting activities for older children. They work very closely with the staff from the school nursery to provide continuity and to promote children's development. Children who attend the provision after school and during the holidays contribute to activity planning. Staff consult them about their interests and provide a relaxed atmosphere where the children can relax and play after school. They enjoy many outings including trips to the park, the Life Centre and to the beach.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed by familiar staff who are always on hand to offer support and reassurance. This contributes to children feeling secure and content in the nursery and developing self-confidence. They know that they are valued as staff listen to what they say and ask questions about their experiences and interests. Children's awareness of diversity is raised through playing with a wide variety of resources which reflect cultural differences and participate in planned activities and celebrations, such as Chinese New Year, Diwali, Easter and Christmas. Good procedures are in place for the care of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The setting promotes inclusive care and all children are welcomed. Staff work closely with parents and outside specialists to ensure children's welfare and development is fully promoted.

Children's behaviour is very good throughout the provision. Staff are good role models for children; they are calm, polite and use consistent methods for behaviour management. Lots of praise is given freely to children to ensure that they develop confidence and self-esteem and understand what they have done well. Clear boundaries are in place and children respond well to staff requests, for example, to help to tidy up and join together at story time. Older children who attend after school and during the holidays are involved in rule setting which helps them to distinguish between right and wrong.

The provision establishes good partnerships with parents and carers. Parents feel comfortable in the provision and approach staff readily to discuss their children. Relationships are relaxed and friendly. Informative brochures and information, such as menus, activity plans, policies and of how to contact Ofsted, are clearly displayed for their attention. As well as sharing information verbally at the start and end of each session, daily information sheets are kept for all children and exchanged with parents to keep them fully informed of their child's care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The environment is organised creatively to promote children's welfare. Space is used to its maximum potential with rooms allowing more than the minimum space

requirements for children. There is a separate base area within one room for babies and very young children. Children attending after school and during the holidays enjoy the use of the school halls and associated facilities of the centre. The crèche facility has not yet operated, but when sessions are held they will have use of a purpose built, attractive room with access to the outdoor area. Discussion with staff indicates that good quality care will be provided in the facility.

Staffing levels are high and those caring for children have a childcare qualification. Secure and robust recruitment and selection and supervision procedures are in place. This ensures adults are suitable to work with children and remain so throughout their employment. Good deployment of staff allows children to receive good supervision from a consistent adult. There is very good collaborative working between the staff who work in the registered provision and the school nursery. This helps to make children feel secure as they progress through their nursery education.

Required policies and procedures which are required for the safe and efficient management of the provision are in place and shared effectively with parents. Most contain the required information. They are used well to support the care of children and to comply with regulations. Records are clear, up-to-date, easily accessible and stored securely.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made 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.

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 all babies drinking utensils are clearly marked with the child's name and assess the risk to children from the blind cords
- continue to develop staff's understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support the outcomes for children under 3 years
- review the policy for lost children to include outings and the accident policy to include notification to Ofsted.

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