



## **Stibbard Childrens Centre**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY330737
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 September 2006
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<b>Registered person</b>	Trustees/Directors of Stibbard Childrens Centre Company
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Sessional 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](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 outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Stibbard Children's Centre is run by a voluntary committee who, with Sure Start funding, have developed the children's centre. It opened in 2006 and operates from a purpose built building within the village of Stibbard, Norfolk, close to the town of Fakenham. A maximum of 50 children may attend the centre at any one time. It is open each weekday from 8.00 to 18.00 throughout the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 64 children aged from two to under eight years on roll. Of these 19 children receive funding for early education. The centre also provides care for children up to the age of 12 years. Children come from the local catchment areas.

The centre employs seven members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's health and nutritional needs are rigorously promoted due to the effective procedures and practices followed by the staff. For example, they remind children to wash their hands after using the toilet and help them to clean their teeth after they have eaten their lunch. Staff talk to the children about the importance of washing off 'the germs that make you poorly' and they reinforce learning through topic work, such as 'our bodies'. As a result, children develop good personal hygiene routines from an early age. Staff are appropriately qualified in first aid and parents have given their written permission to enable them to seek emergency medical care. Consequently, children's well-being is assured because they are able to receive help quickly if they are ill or injured whilst in the centre.

The centre takes positive steps to promote healthy eating and the many displays encourage parents to provide healthy options in their children's packed lunches. Although the centre does not currently provide a cooked mid-day meal for those who stay all day, plans are in place to seek suitable provision and the staff offer a range of appetising hot snacks such as lasagne, cottage pie or cheese on toast at tea time. Children enthusiastically select toppings to prepare their own pizzas and they develop their taste buds by sampling curries. They thrive because the staff take account of their allergies, likes and dislikes when providing food. Pre-school children serve themselves at the snack bar and relish chatting with the staff as they eat. The adults seize this opportunity to tell children that they will help to keep themselves healthy if they eat plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables. They offer plenty of choices to tempt children to try foods that they may not have previously eaten, such as peppers or celery.

Children are developing a positive attitude to healthy living. They look forward to playing outside, especially during the summer months when, as well as being active, children can experience routine play in the fresh air. However, outside play is not possible when the toddler group wishes to use the play area, however, planned improvements will enable all children to have continuous access to outdoor areas. The staff plan a worthwhile range of physical activities and the out of school children particularly enjoy 'Friday fun!' where they take part in team games, such as the 1000 skips competition, to show off their stamina and suppleness. The staff remind children to help themselves to fresh drinking water when they become hot after playing outside and encourage them to listen to their hearts beating quickly. As a result, children are learning the effect that fresh air and exercise has upon their health.

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

The provision is good.

Children are emotionally secure because they are warmly welcomed into a safe, child-centred setting where they are able to gain a sense of belonging. For example, the rooms are brightly decorated with attractive posters and displays of children's work. The commendable range of well-maintained resources help children to separate from their carers with ease and quickly settle. The television, soft chair and settee provide a homely environment where children can relax after a busy day at school.

Children's safety is given priority and all staff are vigilant to monitor play to protect them from danger. They complete a thorough daily check of the play environment and take worthwhile steps to minimise any perceived hazards. For instance, staff bolt the kitchen and staff room doors when they are not in use because they recognise children could reach the press button exit system and access these areas of the building. However, plans that are already in place to make alterations to the centre will ensure children are fully safeguarded. The staff make skilful use of topics to ensure children are confident in their understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They talk about dangers from traffic and road safety but children also know they must keep the floor tidy to avoid possible accidents. As a result, they are learning to be responsible for the safety of others. Children practise regular fire drills so that they are confident with the process for evacuating the premises safely. The staff carry a well equipped fire bag that contains a variety of life saving items such as a blanket, first aid kit and a mobile phone to ensure children's safety is very effectively promoted.

Children are protected from the risk of possible harm. For instance, the video entry system safeguards them from 'stranger danger' and they are never left alone with persons who have not been vetted. In addition, staff will not release children to an adult unless parents have given their consent and a password is known. All staff are guided by a robust child protection policy. They demonstrate an excellent ability to recognise the signs or symptoms of child abuse and have up to date Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance to hand so that they can respond quickly to their concerns. Consequently, children's welfare is effectively promoted.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy and have a strong bond with the staff who are consistently kind and attentive in their approach to them. The younger children greatly benefit from the warm greeting and close, personal attention they receive. They are becoming confident and self assured from a very early age and come into the room ready to have fun. Children have superb choices within the free play programme and they are stimulated by the extensive range of bright, colourful toys and equipment that they are able to independently access.

Children rapidly build on their existing skills because the staff make very effective use

of questioning as they play with them. They talk to the children about what they are doing asking 'What colour are these?' and continue to stretch their learning by prompting 'Can you find the black grapes?' Children are beginning to concentrate and they take great care with their work. Staff make highly effective use of praise to help them to persevere with challenges and younger children relish the encouragement. Consequently, they are able to successfully complete difficult programmes using the computer from an early age.

Older children enjoy some good humoured banter with the out of school staff and they are very much at ease in each other's company. They actively seek out members of staff to play games with them, such as air hockey or 'Guess who?' The staff plan and provide an exciting programme of activities for the out of school children including candle making, stained glass windows, woodwork and a variety of sports. They respond to the children's interests to provide a relaxed and flexible child-led routine with many interesting play opportunities. Lots of activities are carefully designed to encourage children to work together despite the difference in their ages. As a result, they have great fun and spend their time purposefully occupied.

#### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are motivated to learn and confident to try new experiences. They make very rapid progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of their learning because the staff have a strong knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They know the children well and use their comprehensive understanding of how they learn to provide challenging activities that are extremely well matched to children's needs and interests. Furthermore, the staff display an exceptional enthusiasm and show that they genuinely enjoy working with the children. As a result, they maintain a vibrant learning environment. Staff meet regularly to plan the curriculum and evaluate their observations of children's learning. They provide a splendid continuous play programme and topics, such as 'mini beasts', are exceptionally well developed to capture children's interest. The staff skilfully monitor routine play and use the focussed activities to assess children's current abilities so that they can guide future planning and address any identified gaps in learning. Consequently, children make rapid progress as the experiences offered are not only varied and exciting, but they also support them to do things that extend their capabilities.

Children get on exceedingly well together and are developing firm friendships. For example, they are thrilled to see each other and eagerly greet their friends and members of staff as they return from their summer holidays. Children work very happily together and make an active contribution to each session by helping to tidy up. Their confidence is extremely well promoted and children look forward to assisting staff when it is their turn to be the 'special helper'. They are learning to share with sensitive support from staff who make good use of a timer to help them to take turns. Children's communication, language and literacy skills are exceptionally well fostered. They speak out very confidently at 'show and tell' time and relish talking about the toys that they have brought from home to share with their friends. Excellent use of labelling in words and pictures helps children to develop very early reading skills and recognise that print carries meaning. Children self-select from a well

stocked bookcase and use books for pleasure. They listen attentively to stories because the staff make familiar tales more interesting by the commendable use of story sacks. Children access a splendid range of mark-making materials every day. The resources are graduated from fine pencils to chunky felt tipped pens to help children to move forwards to the next step in their development. Consequently, older children are able to form recognisable letters and write their names.

Children use numbers confidently because the staff take every opportunity to encourage them to count within routine activities. Staff capably use the superb range of mathematical resources, such as the 'compare bears', to encourage children to 'find some more' or calculate 'How many have you got now?' so that they quickly develop their mathematical thinking. Children demonstrate their positional awareness competently as they follow simple instructions to find toys 'in front of' or 'behind' members of staff. They have impressive opportunities to investigate the natural world. For instance, children observe the wild life that inhabits the longer grass, plant seeds, watch the flowers or vegetables grow and study life cycles of frogs or butterflies. They are fascinated by the range of resources that encourage them to question how things work, such as the camera or hole punch, and show very good control of the mouse when using the computer. Children discover the wider world through an impressive range of topics including the Hindi festival of Holi, the Jewish festival of Hanukkah and the Chinese New Year.

Children have superb opportunities to develop their imaginations because the role play area frequently changes from a home to a café, hospital or vet's surgery according to the topic. They enthusiastically express their ideas and feelings through music and choose from a wealth of pearl paints or vibrant collage materials to be responsible for their creations from beginning to end. Furthermore, children are given a sense of pride in their work because it is displayed to decorate the play room. Children's sensory development is also very well promoted. They are encouraged to explore texture using many different natural materials such as wet and dry sand, shells or leaves and their sense of smell is developed by the introduction of different aromas to the play dough.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children from all backgrounds feel at home in the centre because the staff value what they have to offer. They take time to get to know the children and their families so that they are able to meet individual needs exceptionally well. Children explore an excellent range of small world resources such as wheelchairs, crutches, play figures and a toy guide dog to help them to value and respect people of all abilities. They learn to consider each other's needs because the staff are very positive in their approach and sensitively use praise to help children to feel good about themselves. Therefore, they show an exceptionally caring attitude towards each other and older children greatly enjoy helping the pre-school children by reading stories to them when they join together during after school or holiday periods. Children are also learning to appreciate 'people who help us' through the wide range of visitors who come to the centre such as the road safety officer, dental nurse and health visitor.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They make friends easily and have excellent opportunities to learn about our multicultural society through the vibrant posters, the positive images in the wide range of fiction or reference books and many other stimulating resources that encourage them to value diversity. Children behave extremely well throughout the centre because the staff set clear, age-appropriate boundaries that are consistently applied. Out of school children are taking responsibility for their own behaviour as they have helped to create the positive rules that encourage 'playing together and sharing.'

Children's individual needs are identified with parents before care is provided and the centre is superbly equipped to care for those having learning difficulties or disabilities. For instance, the colour contrasts between the paint and door furniture greatly assists those having visual difficulties. Staff are experienced in providing care for children having special educational needs and are ably supported by the area co-ordinator to develop individual educational plans. All staff are quick to recognise possible developmental delay and there are robust procedures in place to guide them if children appear not to be making progress. They work closely with parents, carers and other agencies to ensure that they provide appropriate stimulation to help children of all abilities to reach their full potential.

Children have outstanding support to help them to manage their own behaviour. For example, the staff skilfully recognise if children are becoming restless and avoid conflict by diverting them to another activity. All adults are superb role models to the children because they are calm and courteous. They have high expectations of the children and provide commendable guidance to them. The staff get down to the children's level to make sure that they can see their faces and quietly talk about their actions to help them to understand right from wrong. As a result, children's behaviour is exemplary.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents are provided with a superbly produced, high quality brochure that clearly explains how they can be fully involved in the care and early years education that is provided for their children. They are invited to express their views through the compliments or complaints forms throughout their time in the centre and they exchange information informally as children are delivered. Furthermore, parents also have valuable opportunities to share progress on a more formal basis. For instance, they complete an 'I can do' profile to advise staff about their child's starting points towards the early learning goals; they contribute comments, photographs and examples of their children's work to update their developmental record books and are invited to an open evening to discuss progress with their children's key worker. Consequently, parents and carers speak extremely positively about the centre stating 'my children are very happy here' and 'I'm delighted with the provision.' They particularly like 'the hands-on activities' and feel they 'can always talk to the staff.' The excellent, two way flow of information not only enables the staff to provide care and education that is current to children's individual needs, but also helps parents to be fully involved in their learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the pleasing organisation of the premises and resources together with the commendable leadership of the centre. All staff have an in-depth understanding of the National Standards and the Foundation Stage and they are planning a meeting with parents and carers to promote 'Birth to three matters'. The well-established staff teams enjoy working together and individuals show pleasing support for each other. All staff are committed to continuous improvement and development, therefore, they are proactive to access further training to ensure that their knowledge and skills remain up to date. Staff regularly meet to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of their care. As a result, children's well-being is effectively promoted.

All legally required documentation is meticulously maintained and the robust recruitment procedures ensure that the adults are suitable to work with children, therefore, children's welfare is safeguarded. The extensive operational plan helps the centre to operate effectively although many areas require updating. The comprehensive range of policies and procedures are consistently applied by the staff and provide accurate guidance to help them to provide good quality care for children. In particular, the purposeful aims and objectives 'to ensure that every child gets the best start in life' enable staff to provide a safe, caring and supportive environment in which children thoroughly enjoy themselves.

The leadership and management is outstanding. The roles and responsibilities of the staff and the committee members are clearly defined. The child care manager and centre co-ordinator give superb support and guidance to the experienced staff teams and they work together to review the provision to ensure that children's welfare and learning is effectively supported. For instance, a questionnaire is issued to ask parents for responses to enable the manager to assess how well the child care meets children's and families' needs. The manager has excellent leadership qualities and is proactive to address any perceived weakness. For example, an action plan is in place to develop the outside play area, improve internal security and to update the operational plan. The strong committee ensures that the already high standards are maintained and improved by encouraging staff to continue to train. Consequently, children are able to develop their personalities within a stimulating play environment and they make rapid progress in all areas of their learning.

Overall, children's needs are met.

### **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 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 outstanding.

### **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 identified areas for improvement are addressed with particular reference to the outside play areas, internal security and the operational plan.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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