



Ushaw Moor Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY317233
Inspection date	12 September 2006
Inspector	Noreen Elizabeth Appleby
Setting Address	Durham Road, Ushaw Moor, Durham, County Durham, DH7 7LF
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Registered person	Ushaw Moor Pre-school
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	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.

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?

Ushaw Moor Children's Centre is one of two facilities run by the committee of Ushaw Moor Pre-school. It was registered in 2005 and operates from purpose-built premises in the grounds of Ushaw Moor Junior School. A maximum of 18 children may attend the setting at any one time. The group is open from 08.00 to 18.00 each weekday throughout the year, excluding public holidays and the Christmas holiday period. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 14 children, all aged two years, on roll. The group mainly serves the needs of the local community, although some children come from a wider geographical area. Children generally attend a variety of sessions to suit parents' working patterns.

The group employs six members of staff to work with children. Of these, four staff hold an appropriate Level 3 qualification. The remaining two staff hold Level 2 qualifications and are working towards an appropriate Level 3 qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well supported; for example, through formal sickness policies and regular cleaning routines regarding premises and equipment. Management ensure effective first aid arrangements are in place, including formal consents for seeking emergency medical treatment or advice. Children's accidents are suitably recorded and relevant information is fully shared with parents or carers. Sound arrangements are identified for the administration of children's medication. Thorough nappy-changing procedures help to prevent the spread of infection. Children are also beginning to learn about the importance of personal hygiene routines, for example, as they wash their hands after messy play activities or after toileting. However, they are not always encouraged to wash their hands before they eat snack.

Children benefit from daily outdoor play activities. They enjoy exploring the garden or using outdoor equipment, such as ride-on toys, the play-house or playing in the sand pit. They are developing physical coordination, as well as getting plenty of fresh air.

Children's catering arrangements are thoroughly discussed with parents. Staff take good account of their individual dietary requirements. They ensure foodstuffs provided by parents are suitably stored and they are vigilant about children not sharing food. Children enjoy regular drinks and healthy snacks, such as fresh fruit or raisins. The setting also provides nutritious main meals, as required. Children are effectively learning about healthy eating and food hygiene. For example, they completed a 'Little Chefs' course, which included listening to stories, tasting different fruits and helping to make fruit smoothies. Staff intend to include older children in discussion about menu-plans, thereby helping them to develop an understanding of making healthy choices. At snack-time, children sit together with staff and peers. Younger children are learning to feed themselves competently and all children are learning social skills, such as using good table manners.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are appropriately cared for in a suitable, spacious environment. Play areas are welcoming and bright, with children's work and photographs attractively displayed. Children benefit from a good range of equipment and resources that are suitably maintained in a clean, safe condition. Accessible storage arrangements allow children to explore with interest, develop their independence and make choices about what they wish to play with. A comfortable quiet area is available for children to rest and relax together.

Staff have carried out a formal safety risk assessment to identified potential safety hazards. They also use a daily checklist to ensure they minimise risks to children. Children are learning sound strategies for keeping themselves safe, for example, by using climbing equipment appropriately and by using suitable road safety routines when on walks or outings. They are also learning about fire safety, as smoke alarms are regularly tested, although the emergency drill has not yet been practised with staff and children.

Children's well-being is satisfactorily considered in matters of child protection. A formal policy statement has been drafted, including the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against staff. However, a copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures is not available within the nursery and present arrangements do not ensure that children's existing injuries are appropriately recorded. Nevertheless, some staff have completed in-house training and have sound plans in place for ensuring children's welfare is suitably protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff are friendly and approachable to children and parents. They demonstrate a sound understanding of children's individual needs and preferences and ensure children's welfare is successfully promoted. All areas are well set out to provide an inviting, accessible play and learning environment. Children are allowed to explore and develop at their own pace, yet given appropriate advice, encouragement and praise. Staff talk to them, ask questions and take time to listen to what the children say, thereby enhancing their enjoyment and extending their learning. All children appear to be happy and settled within the group. Even new children move around confidently as they explore and enjoy their first introductory visit to the setting. Children are developing a sound sense of routine. They are learning to form good relationships with adults and peers. They are respectful towards staff and are learning to play nicely together.

Staff have not yet developed formal planning systems for the group. However, they demonstrate a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum, for children over three years of age. They are presently developing their knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, so they can draw up appropriate planning and assessment systems for all children who attend. Nevertheless, children are able to readily access a broad range of play and learning opportunities, which help them to gain new skills across all areas of their development. For example, they are gaining social skills through positive interaction with adults and peers. They are developing physical skills by using large outdoor apparatus or small hand-held tools and equipment. They are gaining imagination, through using small world resources or dressing-up equipment. A variety of art and craft activities also help them to develop creativity. Children's work is attractively displayed, enabling parents to know what the children have been doing, as well as giving children pride in their achievements.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are effectively valued as individuals and treated with equal respect and consideration. Their individual needs, including any special needs, are thoroughly discussed with parents and competently met. Staff are well aware of gender issues and promote 'free choice' within the group. Children are learning about differing abilities, other cultures, religions and the wider world through accessing a sound range of activities and resources. They have adequate opportunities to contribute towards the group. For example, they make independent choices about activities and have opportunities to help with simple daily routines, such as tidying up.

Children behave well because staff set realistic expectations and sensitively reinforce appropriate boundaries, when required. Positive behaviour management strategies are well used and children respond enthusiastically to the purposeful praise they receive. They play happily together and are learning to share, take turns and have respect and consideration for each other.

Good information-sharing systems are maintained with parents and carers, in order to support children's care arrangements and routines. Staff also work with other professionals, such as a speech and language therapist, to ensure children are well supported. Appropriate contracts and formal consents are maintained in line with the requirements of the National Standards. A broad range of written policy statements, informative notice boards and regular newsletters also keep parents and carers fully informed. There are suitable arrangements in place to record complaints, although relevant policies and procedures have not yet been updated in line with regulatory changes. Staff hold open days, as well as using verbal daily updates to keep parents well informed about their child's care and progress. Comments received from parents and carers indicate that they are very happy with the setting and confirm that their children enjoy attending.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care and well-being is well met. The registered provider implements sound recruitment, vetting and induction procedures which ensure staff are appropriately qualified and suitable for their individual roles. Children have good staff support as a result of above average staff-child ratios being maintained. They benefit from an enthusiastic team of staff, who demonstrate a strong commitment to the group. For example, they have attended numerous training sessions including food hygiene, first aid, Birth to three matters, Little Chefs and Kalabash kids musical movement. They also have further training planned for the coming months, to improve their knowledge and develop child care practices within the group.

Children and staff attendance is appropriately recorded and children's registration records are appropriately used to record personal information, along with other relevant details. Policy statements and associated documents are presently being developed, so all relevant information (including the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures) is available within the setting and that policy information is totally up-to-date. Records are securely stored to ensure confidentiality and retained in line with the National Standards.

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

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 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):

- ensure children wash their hands before eating
- improve fire safety arrangements by practising regular fire drills with staff and children
- ensure child protection arrangements meet the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures and that children's existing injuries are suitably recorded
- continue to develop planning and assessment systems, for example, by using the 'Birth to three matters' framework for children under three years of age
- ensure the complaints procedure is updated in line with the additional regulatory requirements issued in October 2005.

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