



Milecross Phoenix Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY320664
Inspection date	02 November 2006
Inspector	Pauline Margaret Todd
Setting Address	Mile Cross Road, Norwich, Norfolk, NR3 2LE
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Registered person	Mile Cross Phoenix Childrens' Project
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Mile Cross Phoenix Children's Project is a well established group. They moved into new premises in 2006. It is situated on Mile Cross Road in the city of Norwich, Norfolk. A maximum of 50 children under eight years may attend the centre at any one time. The crèche is open flexible times to meet the needs of local families. The breakfast club is open from 07.30 to 09.00 and the after school club from 14.45 to 18.15 Monday to Friday during term time. The playscheme is open for two weeks at Easter and for four weeks during the summer holidays working four days a week from 10.00 to 12.00 and then from 13.30 to 15.30. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 260 children on roll. Half of these are over the age of eight years. Children mainly come from the local catchment area and the breakfast club and after school service takes and collects children from Norman First, Dowson First, Catton First and Middle and Mile Cross Middle schools. The project offers support to children with learning difficulties and who speak English as an additional language.

The project employs six childcare staff. Most of these, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's good health is promoted appropriately because the Centre has effective procedures to follow to maintain the cleanliness of the premises on a daily basis. Staff follow satisfactory hygiene procedures, for example, they use anti-bacterial spray to disinfect table tops before tea time, they wear protective clothing when preparing food. Children take responsibility of meeting their own personal hygiene needs and access the toilet and hand washing facilities independently. Children's health details and medical requirements are clearly recorded, for example, hay fever and eczema to enable them to be cared for appropriately. Staff have current first aid knowledge to ensure children's well-being in the event of an accident.

Children have regular drinks to keep them healthy. They access low sugar squash from a jug sited on the hatchway between the kitchen and play room as they wish. They are provided with nutritious food in adequate quantities to promote their healthy growth and development. Children are able to make choices. They tell staff what filling they would like in their toasted sandwiches. They have some opportunities to learn about healthy eating, for example, they eat fruit for dessert. Children's special dietary needs or preferences are accommodated, for example, nut allergies. Clear arrangements have been made to ensure all staff are fully informed when preparing food.

Children benefit greatly from using the outdoor play area and large hall to encourage them to use their bodies and be active. They enjoy playing with skipping ropes, bats and balls. They have great fun using the parachute. However, children are not able to choose when to take part in physical play. Children only use these areas for a large group activity during part of the session. They cannot access the areas as they wish. Children use the quiet comfortable area in one corner of the room to fulfil their own needs with regard to rest and relaxation. They are unable to access this area during the physical play session. They take cushions into the large hall to lay on while other children play actively next to them which does not meet their emotional needs or ensure their safety.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in premises which are safe and suitable. They benefit from using rooms which are warm and welcoming with some displays of children's work on walls and screens. The rooms are prepared ready for children on arrival which promotes their well-being and helps them to feel confident in the setting. A comfortable temperature is maintained and staff open windows to provide ventilation. The children are collected by staff from the local schools and effective procedures are in place to keep them safe. The Centre carries out regular risk assessments to minimise risks. Children are given adequate supervision and staff encourage them to be responsible for their own safety. They remind children to put shoes out of way so

others don't fall over them and to be careful that they don't trip over when dressing up in evening wear. Children can visit the toilets safely. Suitable procedures are available for them to be escorted and for them to use separate facilities to other users of the Centre. Children are kept safe in an emergency because staff are aware of their responsibilities. The evacuation procedures are simple and clear and fire drills are practised regularly.

Children's development and welfare are satisfactorily promoted because they use a range of toys and play equipment. They select their own items from table tops and containers on the floor which encourage them to be independent. They sit comfortably to undertake activities and to eat their meals by using tables and chairs of varying sizes to meet their needs.

Children's welfare is adequately safeguarded by staff being aware of child protection procedures. They recognise their responsibilities towards the children in their care and have undertaken training to update their knowledge.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, well-settled and follow an established routine, for example, snack, play and activities, tea time and physical play time. They take part in a range of activities, for example, board games, books, puzzles, colouring pictures, chalking and construction. They enjoy using glitter on black paper to make colourful firework pictures. Children use their imagination well and pretend to go to sleep and dress-up to 'go out'. Older children are able to spend some time doing their homework.

Staff are very kind and caring. They are friendly and approachable to help children develop their confidence and independence. They have built up a good rapport with the children and there is a sense of fun present. They join in using the dressing-up clothes and acting out role play situations. They display an interest in what the children do and say. They sit with them to play board games and support them with their activities, for example, craft activities and parachute games. However, children arrive at the after school club excited and continue to talk loudly for most of the session. At times, the noise level becomes inappropriate. Staff do not always encourage the children to speak quietly and calmly.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel good about themselves because staff regularly praise them and acknowledge their efforts, for example, for laying the table ready for tea. Staff know the children and their families well. Sufficient details of their needs and preferences are noted on their records to enable suitable care to be given. Children with additional needs would be made welcome and given appropriate support to promote their welfare and development.

Children are learning right from wrong. Staff and volunteers act as good role models by being polite, kind and supportive of each other. Children know what is expected of them as some ground rules have been agreed.

Children's well-being is promoted by the positive relationships which have developed between staff and their parents. There is a useful exchange of information at the end of each session. The parents collect their children from the room and are positive about what their children are doing. Flyers are available to give parents sufficient basic information about the after school club.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff have a high regard for children's welfare and development. They are qualified and suitable to work with children. They undertake some training courses to improve their knowledge and understanding. Effective procedures are followed to ensure adults are sufficiently vetted. The Centre is committed to providing a positive, fun experience for all children and offer appropriate support to their families. Children are assisted in their activities and development by key workers. They are also used to ensure safety during outings.

The arrangements for registration are effective and show when children, staff and visitors are present on the premises to ensure their safety. The documents, records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision are kept. However, not all information is readily available to staff and parents. The Centre is considering combining their policies and procedures into one childcare document to improve consistency.

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

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):

- improve interaction to maintain an acceptable noise level at all times
- develop the organisation of the after school sessions so children can choose when to play actively and when to use the rest facilities
- continue to combine the policies and procedures for all childcare offered at the Centre to improve consistency and the information available to staff and parents.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk