



## **Coumes Spring Children's Centre**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	403682
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 November 2006
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Coumes Spring Children's Centre registered in 1996 and serves the local community and surrounding areas. It operates from a single storey, detached building with two additional units adjacent to the main building within the grounds of Oughtibridge Primary School. There are three playrooms, including a self-contained baby unit and smaller playroom used for group activities. There is a secure, enclosed, outdoor play area available to the children.

A maximum of 34 children aged from birth to eight years may attend the centre at any one time; of these, not more than six may be under two years. The centre is open Monday to Friday, all year round, from 08.00 to 18.00 and children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 70 children on roll, of these, 22 receive funding for early education. The centre supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and three children who have

English as an additional language. The centre provides out of school care for children attending Oughtibridge and Wharnccliffe Side Schools.

There are 12 staff employed to work with the children, six of whom are part time; of these, eight hold an appropriate early years qualification, two are currently on training programmes and two are unqualified. The setting receives support from the local authority community teachers.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children take part in and enthusiastically enjoy a wide range of activities that contribute to keeping them healthy. They enthusiastically undertake regular indoor and outdoor activities on a daily basis to develop their physical skills, enjoy riding bikes, climbing and playing ball games. Creative use of outdoor space allows children to explore in all weathers. They actively explore their surroundings to investigate mini beasts, the garden and play chasing games. Children manipulate small tools well, such as scissors, pencils, glue sticks and paintbrushes, to successfully develop their fine motor skills.

Staff provide numerous opportunities for children to talk about being healthy through the use of projects, displays and planned topics, which are backed up with discussions at snack and meal times. Children enjoy snacks where they try new foods, such as naan bread, pitta bread and dips as part of their Diwali celebrations. Children are developing a good awareness of a healthy diet, as staff talk to them about healthy eating as part of the daily routine. They talk about food that make them big and strong and demonstrate a clear understanding of their likes and dislikes. Snack and meal times are social and enjoyable events where the children sit together and chat about what they have done at home and in nursery. However, the organisation of routines can, on occasion, limit opportunities for children to extend their independence. Children enjoy nutritious school meals and staff take into account children's individual dietary needs when planning and preparing snacks. Information about children's allergies and specific needs is clearly displayed to remind staff. Babies and young children follow home routines, as agreed in care plans, and information is recorded on daily diary sheets to ensure parents are kept well informed.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment, where effective methods ensure they develop good personal hygiene practices. Picture prompts in the bathroom remind them to wash their hands and help them understand the importance of good practice. Children are starting to know their personal needs, for example, getting tissues, washing their hands when messy and relaxing when they are not feeling well. They recognise when they are thirsty and if they are hot or cold, as staff ask how they will cool down to help them find their own solutions, such as removing sweaters and unzipping jackets.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where all risks are minimised. They confidently negotiate their way around, both indoors and out, developing their independence and learning to keep themselves safe. Children understand not to run indoors and to climb with care, as staff sensitively remind them of good practice. Regular discussions and topics help children learn about keeping themselves safe and build on their awareness. For example, walks around the local area remind them how to cross the road and how to take care of themselves. Experienced staff are vigilant in ensuring that the premises are safe and secure by effectively monitoring all visitors to the setting.

Children make informed choices from a wide and stimulating range of toys and equipment, which are easily accessible on low shelves, floor based and in clearly labelled boxes. Well planned areas of the nursery enable the children to find space to be quiet and relax looking at books. They use their creativity in well resourced craft areas and extend their imagination in the home corner and small world areas. A self-contained baby unit allows mobile and non-mobile children under two years space to explore freely and safely. Children benefit from daily access to a well resourced outdoor area in all weathers, with the younger children enjoying daily outings to the village and local park.

Effective procedures are in place to support good practice as the nursery manager is well experienced and demonstrates a broad knowledge of child protection procedures. She ensures all staff know how to keep children safe, as they all complete mandatory basic training. Staff clearly understand their role in protecting children and use this information effectively to promote the children's all round well-being.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at nursery. They make good progress in all areas of development due to knowledgeable staff who plan activities and experiences to keep children interested and motivated. Staff effectively use the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage' and the 'Birth to three matters' framework to provide good quality care and education.

Children are happy, well settled and secure as they enthusiastically undertake a broad range of fun activities. They are confident and interested in their surroundings, establishing very good relationships with staff and children alike. Children select resources to actively make choices about their play and are starting to demonstrate some independence to plan their own time and make decisions about what to do. Children confidently attempt to put on aprons, for playing in the water and coats to play outside. They undertake and enjoy stimulating tasks and activities from the broad and interesting range provided, building using large and small construction blocks and acting out agreed roles in the home corner.

Staff consistently respond to the children's individual needs and adapt activities to follow their ideas and suggestions, allowing space for them to opt out of activities to rest if they are tired. Children are well encouraged and supported to extend and try out new skills, such as feeding

themselves, cutting their own food and exploring outside. They receive high levels of support from staff, who use observations and their knowledge of the children to build on what they can do to extend activities. The nursery staff are starting to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework alongside their own development sheets to support and challenge children under three years. Planning and recording systems throughout the nursery continue to be reviewed to ensure they meet the needs of all children attending. Staff offer babies and young children a wide variety of meaningful and interesting experiences, such as exploring treasure baskets. Young babies are cared for in a warm, secure and sensory environment where their individual needs are responded to effectively. Children are well supported by sensitive staff who offer cuddles and reassurance to help them settle into a new environment.

Before and after school children arrive at the centre happy and well motivated to make choices of activities and plan their own time. They play happily with their friends and make suggestions to staff as to what they would like to do next. Children enjoy leaf printing and using their imagination to build pirate ships using small interlocking bricks.

### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff's broad knowledge of the Foundation Stage ensures that children make good progress in all areas of development. Children are interested and motivated to learn through the use of planned and spontaneous activities and experiences, which challenge and extend them. They use their imagination well during role play activities, making up simple stories when dressing up as fairies and people who help us. They show good concentration skills and have free access to tools and materials, such as wooden and interlocking bricks to construct simple and complex models. They build and design, extending their imagination and their natural creativity using a broad variety of craft materials and resources, including boxes and wool to make 'junk models'. Children are confident speakers and listen intently to each other, sharing experiences, talking about home, family and events with enthusiasm. Staff listen with interest to what the children say, offering support and suggestions to enhance their experiences. Visitors to the centre are made welcome as children enthusiastically recall nursery events and talk about 'wearing jamas' for Children in Need day.

Children are very confident and engage well with each other and welcome visitors; sharing their achievements by talking about going on holiday on a speedy plane and bringing in their favourite toys to show their friends. Staff use a wide variety of mediums to introduce children to words and print, using displays and resources for the children to experiment and perfect their mark making skills. They play well together and alone to enthusiastically progress their ideas. Behaviour is good and reflects the staff's high expectations. Children take turns and share, learning how to manage their own behaviour and respect for others. They enjoy learning about the lives of others through topics and planned activities, for example, Diwali festival and have fun exploring their surroundings searching for mini beasts and growing bulbs and seeds. Children listen intently to staff recalling visits and nursery events and respond excitedly.

Children show a good understanding of number and problem solving, counting and sorting as part of daily routines and through music, songs and games. Observation systems are being developed to effectively monitor children's progress, and information from parents helps to complete the picture. Children undertake a good balance of focused and freely chosen activities,

with staff responding and making changes to incorporate the children's ideas and suggestions where appropriate. Staff demonstrate a broad knowledge of the early learning goals and use this to plan a broad based curriculum to include all areas of learning. They effectively use open-ended questions to extend children's language, develop their thinking and value what they say, using positive responses. Attractive and well presented displays of the children's work successfully contribute to promoting their self-esteem.

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

The provision is good.

Children build strong and respectful relationships with staff and each other, demonstrating good self-esteem, to confidently ask questions and actively make choices. They are warmly welcomed by sensitive staff who value their individuality by using consistent praise and encouragement for achievements and learning new skills. For example, when helping to tidy away, listening well at group time and young babies starting to vocalise and learn new words. A broad range of well planned, meaningful activities and resources help children become aware of similarities and differences, which in turn increases their understanding of the wider world. Children recall outings and discussions with enthusiasm talking about their fundraising 'Toddle Waddle' using prompts from a well planned display of children's work and photographs. They listen intently to stories, such as 'Rama and Sita' and join in discussions about Diwali, asking staff questions about why and where it is celebrated. Children and staff share their experiences talking about visits to India and wearing sari's and bangles to aid the discussions as part of planned and spontaneous activities. This is extended to include snack time where children talk about and taste different foods.

Children enjoy exploring the outdoors, and regular walks to the village and local parks broaden their knowledge of the community and their environment, as well as involvement in community events, such as galas and fundraisers. Photographs and albums are effectively used to reinforce and remind the children of what they have done in nursery and what they saw on their outings. They look at them with excitement, listening intently, recalling events and finding themselves in the pictures. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for whom English is in additional language are welcomed into the provision as good systems are in place to ensure all children are cared for and supported according to their individual needs. Children see basic Makaton signs around the centre and respond well to gestures, signs and non-verbal communication.

Children's behaviour is very good and reflects the staff's high expectations as they understand clear and consistent boundaries, demonstrating care and respect for each other. They share, negotiate and take turns when playing games and using equipment, for example, when taking turns to set the table and negotiate roles when building a train track. Children follow good role models in staff, showing care and consideration for others as they are sensitively reminded to help each other.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff ensure parents are kept well informed about what the children are doing at nursery as effective systems are in place to share information on a daily basis. Daily diary sheets are completed for children under two years showing meals, personal routines and activities throughout the day. Staff are developing new recording and

assessment systems to chart the children's progress through the nursery to add to information from parents. However, parents are not routinely informed about how the stepping stones and the 'Birth to three matters' framework is used to help children learn and progress. Parents receive good quality information about the setting and in turn share their knowledge of their children. Parents confidently approach staff and demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with the setting. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the setting are good. Effective organisation ensures that children's care and learning is well supported by knowledgeable staff who demonstrate a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities to ensure that children's individual needs are met. An established and experienced staff team work well together, following effective procedures to monitor and evaluate the provision. The management team effectively supports the committed staff who are involved in regularly reviewing practice and adopting new procedures, as part of monthly staff meetings.

All staff demonstrate a high commitment to training and development to consolidate practices and further enhance the provision. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures are in place to support good practice and offer an effective service. Staff use many opportunities to meet together, share information and continue to develop working practices. Appraisals effectively identify the training and development needs of the staff and nursery. Staff continue to develop observation and assessment systems to monitor children's progress based on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Previous recommendations regarding updating policies and accident recording have been effectively addressed to support the organisation of the nursery and keep children safe.

Recommendations from the nursery education inspection, for children to have freer access to tools, resources and materials, have been successfully addressed to allow children to extend their natural creativity and develop their own ideas. The recommendation regarding planning and assessment is in the process of being addressed to offer children more responsibility for planning their time and promoting greater challenges for them.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 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 complaint 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):

- continue to develop planning and recording systems
- continue to develop information for parents to raise their awareness of activities and how children progress using the stepping stones and the 'Birth to three matters' framework (also applies to nursery education).

#### 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):

- consider how routines and the organisation of snack time could encourage more independence (also applies to care).

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