



Charlton Family Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY136606
Inspection date	12 December 2006
Inspector	Jeannette Waring
Setting Address	41-43 Shirley House Drive, Charlton, London, SE7 7EL
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Registered person	Irene Grace Dudman
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. 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?

Charlton Family Centre opened in 2002. It is open five days a week during term time from 09:30 until 15:30 and operates from three converted flats situated in the ground floor of a multi-storey block on the Cherry Orchard Estate. This is a residential area in Charlton, close to local shops, public transport and community resources.

There are currently 37 children aged one to five years on roll, this includes a total of nine children who receive funded nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions in both the crèche and the full day care facility. The setting currently supports a number children with learning difficulties as well as a number who speak English as an additional language.

The setting is managed by the sub-committee of the Pre school Learning Alliance (PSLA). In addition to the centre manager, there are a total of five permanent staff working directly with

children, all of whom are appropriately qualified in early years and education. In addition a regular qualified supply worker supplements the staffing when required and a lunch-time supervisor assists each day. The Family Centre receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

There are excellent arrangements in place within the centre to protect children from the spread of infection and to promote their health. Children learn about the importance of good personal hygiene from the staff team who routinely model good practice and explain the reasons for such things as careful hand-washing. Staff build on visits made to the centre by health professionals, for example the dental service. They share information with parents and individually help children as they learn how to clean their teeth effectively.

All areas of the centre are kept clean and the centre cleaner pays particular attention to cleanliness in the bathrooms and kitchen. There are excellent procedures in place for managing children's personal care such as nappy changing and all staff employ rigorous hygiene routines. Parents are given good information about the centre's exclusion policy regarding infectious illnesses, there are very good accident and medication recording procedures in place which are routinely shared with parents and all staff hold up to date first aid qualifications. These measures ensure that children's health is well protected.

Children have very good access to outdoor play. They enjoy the stimulating outdoor environment where staff set out a range of challenging activities each day. They scramble over tyres, build using large bakers crates and enjoy mastering the skills required to use wheeled toys. They dig and rake the soil ready for planting and carefully handle spring bulbs and winter plants as they set them into planters. Even the youngest children enjoy learning to use the garden tools and many do so with a good degree of skill. During very bad weather children enjoy physical games in the training room where they have space to move around freely.

Children in the crèche are provided with a healthy range of snacks and drinks at break time. Children in the day-care room bring a piece of fruit with them each day for their morning snack along with a packed lunch. Parents are given information about healthy options in the parent pack. Some children bring sandwiches but many bring a meal to be heated and served at lunch time. There is a large fridge used exclusively to store children's lunches and very good attention is paid to hygiene by the lunchtime supervisor as she heats and serves children's meals. Children enjoy the relaxed social meal and snack times when staff sit with small groups of children. Children enjoy talking about their meals and are beginning to learn about the importance of a healthy diet as staff talk to them about the benefits of eating fruit and vegetables. Children are able to refresh themselves when they are thirsty and routinely help themselves to water from a covered jug.

The centre provides training for parents, some of which focuses on parenting issues such as health and nutrition and a breast-feeding drop-in also operates from the centre. The excellent

multi-way partnerships between parents, centre staff, trainers and other professionals ensures that children's all-round health and well-being is promoted.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in the warm, welcoming, bright and vibrant environment that staff have created within the centre. Attractive displays featuring photographs of children at play line the corridors. Because very good attention has been paid to providing a safe environment children's safety and security is assured, and older children are able to develop independence as they take themselves to the bathroom or go to their bags in the cloak area. The excellent procedures in place at the start and end of sessions ensure children's safety at these times.

Staff in both the crèche room and the daycare room have provided children with an appropriately challenging and stimulating play environment both indoors and in the garden. Toys and resources are stored in labelled Perspex trays and crates which are kept in child height storage units. Children are able to see resources and to access them safely and independently. Even the very youngest children select toys from the units and are beginning to learn about caring for their environment as they help staff to clear away a finished activity.

A health and safety policy, together with rigorous risk assessments and routine daily premises checks are all in place. Regular fire drills are carried out and fully recorded and clear fire procedures are displayed throughout the building. Children learn about issues such as road safety from visitors to the setting and their learning is extended by staff on outings in the local area.

Procedures for vetting staff and supervising volunteers and visitors are clear and rigorous. Staff's on-going suitability is regularly monitored at supervision and appraisal meetings. This ensures children are protected from un-vetted people and makes sure that they are provided with good quality care. All staff have completed a recent Safeguarding Children course and are keenly aware of their role in keeping children safe from harm or neglect. In order to ensure that staff are able to protect children the centre's policy and procedure for child protection is regularly reviewed to ensure it complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are relaxed, secure, settled and happy. They are making very good progress in their learning and development because staff have an excellent understanding of how to support and encourage children. There is an effective keyworker system in place. Staff spend time working with small groups and individual children, they are aware of children's individual interests and strengths and they build on these by skilfully encouraging children to develop wider interests as they extend their play into new areas.

Staff in the crèche base their planning on the Birth to three matters framework. They plan an interesting range of activities which children find enjoyable and challenging. For example a group of one and two year olds chose to spend a long period of time with a staff member

building with large foam blocks. The children built towers and knocked them down squealing with delight as they did so. The staff member encouraged children to take turns, to share and to repeat the 'ready steady go' command. The children have daily free access to sand, water and paint and they relish the opportunity to explore these activities supported and encouraged by the staff.

In the outdoor area children have opportunities to play with a wide range of toys and activities. Even very young children enjoy raking the garden patch and digging in the tubs as they plant spring bulbs. They show delight and wonder as they rescue a worm from the water in a tyre and watch it crawl away into a patch of newly raked earth.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Because the staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn, children in the daycare room flourish. Children are active learners, they are able to make choices, to select resources and to initiate activities for themselves within a carefully planned environment. Staff routinely observe and record children's interests and progress and use this information to plan for their next steps. Because of this, and the fact that staff are skilled at building on children's particular interests, children's learning is extended according to their individual needs and they make rapid progress. For example, a child was looking at the globe and talking to a member of staff about countries they had visited, where members of their family lived, and the different kinds of transport needed to visit far away places. After a while the child asked where her house was on the globe. The staff member said that she needed a different kind of map to see where her house was and promised to bring this in the following day. The next day the child was keen to find out where her street was and, in the afternoon, was able to point out to the inspector, where the centre was located on a large print out from the A-Z.

Children have good communication skills, they enjoy conversations with each other and with staff and are confident speaking in small groups. A number of children with language delay and who speak English as a second language attend the setting and staff provide these children with excellent support. Children enjoy listening to stories, they ask questions, try predict what will happen next and are able to recall and explain elements of the story afterwards as they talk with staff. They handle books well and use them for both pleasure and for reference. Children have good opportunities to draw, paint and make marks in a variety of activities and are able to recognise, name and copy familiar letters and understand that print carries meaning.

Children are able to explore numbers and counting in a variety of practical activities and older children are able to count a number of objects reliably and to confidently recognise and name numerals to 10. Because staff routinely use mathematical language and help children to understand simple mathematical ideas children understand concepts such as bigger, taller, more and less and are able to describe things by position, size and shape. Children enjoy investigating new activities and materials and their environment. They enthusiastically mix a new batch of playdough, naming the ingredients and discussing the properties of each one. They enjoy exploring in the garden where they have built a wood pile and a stony puddle to attract mini-beasts and recently staff helped them to build a wormery after finding worms in the garden. Children are confident with everyday technology and are enjoying learning how to

use the new computer. The outdoor area is used very well and staff ensure that children have exciting and challenging opportunities for physical activity in the garden and during bad weather they enjoy energetic games in the training room.

Children express themselves creatively using a variety of media and materials. They can paint freely throughout the day and are proud of their art work which is attractively displayed around the centre. They spend time creating games and acting out in the home corner as they cook, dress the dolls and plan to do the shopping. Children's personal, social and emotional development is particularly well supported. They have excellent relationships with staff and are beginning to form friendships with each other as they play together. Children are confident, motivated to learn and eager to attempt new activities. They are able to make independent choices, to concentrate for extended periods and to complete tasks. Behaviour is excellent and children are polite, courteous, sociable and learning to become self-disciplined.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Both children and staff at the centre reflect the diverse local community and the staff team ensure that they provide an inclusive and harmonious setting where everyone feels welcome and valued. Children's self-esteem is high because staff respect and value each child. Staff know about children's family background and encourage families to share festivals and celebrations so children learn about elements of each others culture and traditions. Children with disabilities or learning difficulties are provided with good support by the centre's special educational needs co-ordinator. She works sensitively with parents and with a range of other professionals to ensure that children have an individual plan in place which enables them to make good progress. She makes sure that children's key workers understand the plans and provides regular feedback to parents.

Children are very well behaved. Because staff have high but realistic expectations of children's behaviour and put in place clear boundaries which they remind children of, children are learning to be self-disciplined. Children learn to be polite and well mannered from staff who are consistently good role models. Children are kind and helpful and they show care and concern if anyone is upset or hurt.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They have a good awareness of right and wrong in line with their stage of development. They are learning to respect and value everyone as an individual as they play together in a supportive and harmonious environment. They show kindness towards each other and they express delight and wonder for example as they explore and rescue a worm in the garden.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Parents are given a comprehensive induction pack when their child joins the setting. This details the centre's policies, procedures and mission statement. It gives good information about the Birth to three matters framework which is implemented in the crèche and about the Foundation Stage which is used to plan for children's learning in the daycare room. In the corridors, attractive displays showing children at play in the centre illustrate the aspects from the Birth to three matters framework and areas of learning from the foundation stage, and there are many leaflets available to parents in the comfortable

parents room and the training room. Parents are given good informal and formal feedback on their children's progress and development, including a written report each term and the invitation to attend a review meeting with their child's key worker when they are able to contribute to their children's records. Because staff work in close partnership with parents, children benefit from the shared understanding of their strengths, interests and needs.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children are cared for by a committed, motivated and enthusiastic staff team, all of whom hold appropriate childcare qualifications. There are clear and rigorous procedures in place to ensure that new staff are suitable, to monitor staff's on-going suitability and to supervise and vet volunteers and student placements in order to ensure children's safety.

Children benefit from being cared for in a well organised, vibrant, inclusive and harmonious centre which offers a challenging and accessible environment that promotes their learning and development. A comprehensive set of policies and procedures which is regularly reviewed and updated underpins the work at the centre providing staff with a clear reference tool. All documentation is maintained to a high standard and enables staff to ensure children's health and well-being.

Leadership and management is outstanding. There is a clear, well-defined and understood management structure in place. The centre manager has a clear vision for the centre, she is able to motivate and enthuse staff by negotiating changes and supporting their personal development. The staff team is dedicated and committed to providing children with high quality care and education within an inclusive and supportive setting. Planning for children's learning is systematic and builds on what children know and can do. Staff have regular supervision meetings when they discuss practice issues and there are good systems in place to monitor and review the nursery education programme. In addition the centre manager and staff constantly seek ways of improving the service they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the setting has reviewed its procedure for recording accidents and now routinely ensures that parents sign each entry. This protects children's health by ensuring that everyone caring for the child is fully aware of any accident. Children's safety is assured because the setting now has clear and rigorous procedures in place to make sure that all adults have been suitably vetted. They now ensure that children have daily access to books which show positive images of the wider world and this adds a further dimension to the excellent anti-discriminatory practice within the setting.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints 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 outstanding. 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

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

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 *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