



Laurel Bank Early Years Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	512410
Inspection date	05 October 2006
Inspector	Ingrid Pine
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Registered person	Leeds City Council - Early Years Service
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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Laurel Bank Early Years Centre has been registered since 1989. It is registered to care for a maximum of 40 children. This includes 14 under two years and 26 under three years. There are 36 children on roll at present. It is open Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 18.00 throughout the year, except bank holidays.

The purpose-built nursery is situated in Middleton on the outskirts of Leeds and serves families living within the local community. The nursery is divided into three playrooms. An additional central area and outdoor play spaces are available for all children attending the nursery. There is also accommodation available for community groups and their activities.

All staff are appropriately qualified and there is support for children with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery has close links with the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership advisory teaching support unit.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Babies' and young children's health is suitably promoted through the implementation of effective hygiene practices and procedures. All children are encouraged to wash their hands and the older children are adept at their own personal hygiene routines. There is a comprehensive written sickness policy that is understood by parents. This ensures that cross infection is minimised and children stay at home when they are ill.

Young children and babies are gaining a good understanding of healthy eating at nursery and thoroughly enjoy the mostly healthy meals that are provided for them. Mealtimes are used as a social occasion and all children and staff sit together around well-laid out tables. Children have exemplary table manners and even the youngest children attempt to feed themselves, with support from adults. The manager is aware of the need to promote parents' knowledge and understanding of the importance of giving children a consistently healthy, nutritious diet. Children are provided with fresh drinking water throughout the day. They benefit from well-planned activities and well-organised areas to develop their physical skills and enjoyment of exercise. For example, they confidently manoeuvre bikes and pushchairs around the outdoor area. They are able to access comfortable, cosy areas for rest and relaxation.

There is an effective key person system in place ensuring that babies' and young children's emotional needs are well met. Members of staff work together in teams so that babies and young children have a significant other person to relate to when their own worker is absent. All children freely explore their own environment with confidence and independence, and babies learn to gain good control of their bodies through encouragement and support from staff and appropriately placed furniture and equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The setting is well maintained and very welcoming to children, parents and carers. Children's work is used effectively to create a bright and interesting environment.

Babies and young children are cared for in a safe, mostly secure and welcoming environment. All required policies and procedures are in place as part of the operational plan. However, occasionally visitors' identification is not checked before they are admitted to the nursery or asked to sign in.

Effective deployment of space, resources and staff ensures all areas are well supervised and allows children to move with freedom, safety and independence. Children have access to equipment which is safe, suitable and purposeful. It is of high quality and stored appropriately so that children can freely choose their own activities. Children are successfully encouraged to

think about their own safety and practitioners remind them gently about the rules. For example, members of staff in the outdoor area prompt children to ride their bikes sensibly and be respectful of other children playing around them.

Children are kept free from harm through the staff members' very good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and the provision's sound procedures. They are well trained and have good support from experienced management.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are given responsibility for making their own choices and decisions, which enables them to be competent learners and develop individually at their own pace. For example, young children move freely between their own base, the central area and the outdoor play space. They participate and join in with a varied, imaginative range of interesting activities and experiences. Tactile resources are very much in evidence and ensure that babies and young children learn to use all their senses. For example, there are floating panels and mobiles hung from the ceiling, baskets of natural materials for children to touch, and homemade instruments for children to create their own music.

There are cosy areas where children can sit and read books. Babies sit comfortably on adults' knees listening to favourite stories or singing nursery rhymes. Practitioners use their knowledge of children's individual developmental needs to plan these appropriate activities, and share their knowledge with parents through discussion and written information. Practitioners use the 'Birth to three matters' framework confidently ensuring that children have positive learning experiences.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and settled. They are valued and respected by staff who know them well. The staff team is committed to equality and provides opportunities for children to foster positive attitudes towards one another. Resources and topics teach children about the community and the more diverse wider world. For example, they celebrate their own cultural festivals and those from the wider community. They try food from other countries and learn songs from Africa and the Caribbean. The setting has a successful integration policy. Children have a series of visits before attending nursery full-time. Parents are encouraged to stay with them as long as they wish until children feel confident enough to be left.

The effective implementation of consistent and appropriate boundaries promotes children's good behaviour. They are well supported by staff and given lots of encouragement and praise which allows them to feel celebrated as individuals. Children learn to take turns, share and to respect each other's needs.

The setting has a comprehensive inclusion policy and members of staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the individual needs of each child in their care. There is good support for children with learning difficulties and there is a high awareness of the needs of children

within the area, particularly in language and speech development. There is a designated special educational needs coordinator and the setting works well with other agencies to provide support and guidance for children, parents and staff.

There is a strong partnership with parents. They are made to feel very welcome within the nursery and their opinions are valued. Parents are provided with good quality information about the provision through a parent information pack which includes information about the provision as well as detailed, well-written policies and procedures. The key person system encourages parents to share their knowledge of their children's skills either verbally or through writing their own comments in development profiles. Parents comment very positively on the service provided.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a well-organised setting. The effective use of space and resources allows children to move with safety, freedom and independence. There is a comprehensive range of written policies and procedures in place which keep children safe and promote their welfare and care.

Recent changes in the structure and provision of the setting have involved several organisational adjustments. The management and members of staff have worked well together to implement these changes in order to promote children's enjoyment, learning and development. There are comprehensive contingency plans in place to cover for staff absences to ensure there is consistency of care. The implementation of detailed policies and procedures ensures the provision runs smoothly and efficiently. Effective leadership ensures the views and ideas of all staff are valued and respected. The management team has a future development plan and carries out systematic reviews of practice. This ensures any weaknesses in their practice and provision are identified and resolved quickly. All members of staff are eager to develop their own learning through taking part in the provision's ongoing training programme.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provision was asked to make several improvements. Cots have been moved to ensure that children's safety is not compromised when practising emergency evacuation procedures. The outdoor area now provides appropriate activities for children under three years of age. The higher standard of hygiene regarding dummies and comforter blankets ensures that babies' health is promoted. Dummies are now sealed in individual named containers and children's own blankets are kept separately.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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

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.

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 that the established procedures for allowing visitors into the setting are always adhered to
- continue to develop strategies that promote children's healthy growth and development.

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