



YMCA Townhill Early Years

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY330639
Inspection date	15 November 2006
Inspector	Alison Jane Kaplonek
Setting Address	Benhams Road, Townhill, Southampton, SO18 2FG
Telephone number	01489 785228
E-mail	peter.cooper@ymca-fg.org
Registered person	YMCA Fairthorne Group
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 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?

YMCA Townhill Nursery is a Children's Centre. It is funded by Southampton City Council and is managed by the YMCA Fairthorne group. It is one of a number of children's enterprises in Hampshire, Dorset and the Isle of Wight managed by YMCA Fairthorne Group. It opened in 2006 and operates from a large room which is divided into four open plan areas, in a purpose built annexe on the site of Townhill Park Infant school in Southampton. A maximum of 30 children aged from two to five years may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 23 children on roll, 14 of whom are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. One full time and three part time staff work with the children, all of whom are appropriately qualified. The nursery welcomes children who receive funding for nursery education and also children who have special educational needs.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play an active part in keeping themselves healthy by independently taking themselves to the toilet and washing their hands. They can access the dustpan and brush to help to sweep up the sand, and the low sink for washing their hands or cleaning other items. They are protected from the possible spread of infection because staff implement good hygiene procedures, such as wearing gloves during nappy changing or dealing with accidents. Staff continually encourage children to wash hands before eating and after using the toilet and they ensure that there is always a member of staff on duty who has current first aid training.

The nursery provides healthy and nutritious snacks each day, which consist of a selection of fruits, breadsticks or cream crackers which the children butter themselves. The snack table is open for a short time at each session and children can choose to snack when they want to, self registering with their name labels and pouring their own drinks. Children who stay all day bring a packed lunch and staff are beginning to work with parents to encourage healthy eating. Children help themselves to drinking water from the jugs and cups which are always available outside of snack time.

Children develop a good range of skills during their physical play. They enjoy their outdoor time in the play area, although because of space limitations, the activities they take part in on site are limited. Staff compensate for this by taking the children to use the infant school playground where they can access a wider range of equipment which enables them to practice skills, such as running, jumping and balancing. Staff are aware that at present there are limited opportunities for children to climb. Children confidently use a good range of small equipment to increase their manipulative skills, such as scissors, paint brushes, and peg boards and are gaining in control and co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is assured in the secure, child centred environment. The premises are welcoming and children's work is displayed on the walls, making them feel valued. Access to the building is monitored by staff at all times and any visitors or volunteers are supervised. Children independently access well maintained resources, many of which promote equality of opportunity. The outside play area is fenced in and storage sheds kept locked. The space inside is used appropriately and creatively and is divided into learning or interest areas which are easily accessible by the children. Staff are vigilant and reduce the risk of accidents by carrying out daily, visual risk assessments on the premises and equipment, inspecting the outside play area before children access it. However, the office is at present accessible to children. Fire evacuation is practised regularly with staff and children. Staff have an emergency bag which contains nappies, tissues, the mobile phone and a first aid kit. This is positioned between the front and back doors and is taken out in the event of an evacuation.

Children are well protected by staff who have a good understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give priority to ensuring that children's care and welfare are of paramount importance. There is a comprehensive child protection policy in place and this is shared with all staff and is also easily accessible by parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have access to a wide range of resources and activities which support learning in all areas. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language have individual education plans. Children ask questions as they play and the staff respond and interact well, for example asking which shaped bricks are needed to make a train or which coloured traffic light means stop. Frequent encouragement and praise promotes confidence and self-esteem enabling children to take a positive role in their own learning. Activities planned cover all areas of learning whilst allowing time for children to make choices and stimulate their own learning, for example taking part in the hospital role play or completing a number puzzle.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are motivated to learn by the provision of the good range of stimulating resources and activities provided. They are able to operate independently within the learning environment, confidently selecting new activities which support their learning across all areas. They move easily between the writing table, maths activities, role play and messy areas, often initiating their own learning. Children are able to set their own challenges and progress at their own pace while learning through their play.

They are supported by staff who have a good knowledge of each child's individual needs and who are beginning to draw up plans accordingly. All staff are involved in making observations of children's progress, although the system to link these assessments to future planning is still being developed.

Children chatter confidently to staff and often to each other, explaining what they are doing, making or painting. They use language to initiate and organise their play, for example as they make their play dough cakes and talk about putting them in the oven to cook. Many children enjoy talking with staff members and each other, particularly while they have their snack or lunch. They also join in with rhymes, songs and stories and listen attentively at whole group story time. Some children are beginning to recognise the letters in their names and on the well labelled resources. They use mark making during their play, for example making medical notes in the hospital corner, or drawing pictures of their mums.

Children enjoy a good range of games and activities to develop their number skills and some count and recognise numbers to ten. They learn about shape, size and quantity through practical activities such as playing with water, sand and dough. They enjoy singing number songs and are beginning to develop an understanding of addition and subtraction as they talk about the number of speckled frogs left on the log. They use mathematical language such as longer or shorter as they explore with the dough, and learn about patterns and shapes during their outside play in the school playground.

Children use their imaginations well in numerous play situations, for example during role play and when creating art and craft work. They explore colour and texture when painting or using collage materials, which they access confidently, cutting and sticking as required. Children are interested in the world around them, and have enjoyed talking about emergency vehicles such as fire engines and ambulances. They gain a good sense of time and routine as they listen carefully when the musical instrument is played to indicate tidy up or snack time. Children talk about themselves and their families and are learning about the customs of others. Children are interested in information technology and some are able to operate simple equipment such as the toy tills or musical toys, although there are limited opportunities for them to use information technology to fully support their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and fully included in the routine of the nursery. They play an active part in the selection of activities and resources, and help to tidy up and sweep the floor. They also select their own cups and bowls and pour their own drinks. Their individual needs and personalities are valued by staff who are good role models and who praise children's good behaviour and positive achievements, such as tidying up quickly or helping each other. As a consequence, most children settle easily and behave well.

Children concentrate well and have good levels of confidence and self-esteem. They are learning to share and take turns and beginning to form good relationships with adults and their friends. Children with special needs or English as an additional language are welcomed into the nursery and provided with the appropriate support to enable them to feel valued and included. Children have access to a selection of resources which promote equality of opportunity. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good and this has an important influence on children's wellbeing. Parents are provided with a wide range of information regarding policies and procedures in a folder in the hall and in regular newsletters, although some feel they lack information about the planning system and what their children are learning. They are able to be involved in their children's learning by joining the helpers rota or coming in to any session to share their expertise or skills. Parents state that staff are very approachable and that they gain a good insight into their child's day during verbal feedback when they collect their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are fully included and happy in the well organised nursery environment. They are cared for in bright and welcoming premises where staff are appropriately checked and well qualified. Staff work directly with the children, providing good support when needed and enabling new children to settle and become familiar with the nursery routines. They work effectively as a team, are clear about their roles and responsibilities, and ensure that all children's needs are met. Children benefit from a safe environment because clear recruitment and vetting procedures for all staff are in place and implemented well. Children gain from the use of a comprehensive

selection of policies and procedures and well maintained records, all of which are shared with parents.

Leadership and management is good. There is a clear management structure within the setting and all staff and management are involved in providing care and education of a good standard. They ensure that evaluation is carried out during regular staff meetings and are implementing a system to monitor the nursery education provision. Staff take part in an induction process when they start at the nursery and then receive regular appraisals to identify their training needs. Management are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the nursery education provision and have drawn up a comprehensive development plan for the future. The nursery meets the needs of the range of 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.

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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 office is made inaccessible to children.

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):

- continue to develop the planning and assessment system, and ensure that parents and carers are kept informed.

- continue to develop the range of resources, with particular regard to those for climbing and information technology.

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