



The Meadow Children's Centre Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Unique Reference Number | EY335427 |
| Inspection date | 19 October 2006 |
| Inspector | Mary Van De Peer |
| Setting Address | The Meadow Children's Centre, Bell Wood Primary School Furfield Close, Parkwood Maidstone, Kent, ME15 9EZ |
| Telephone number | 01622 691882 or 755154 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | The Meadow Children's Centre |
| Type of inspection | Childcare |
| Type of care | 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.

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?

The Meadow Children's Centre Nursery opened in 2006 and is currently run by the Local Authority with a multi agency committee. It operates from several rooms in a Children's Centre, in Parkwood, Maidstone. A maximum of 45 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 29 children on roll. The nursery can support children with additional needs and those who speak English as an additional language, although none are presently attending. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas. Children come from the wider and local community. The nursery employs nine staff. There are seven staff, including the manager, who hold appropriate early years qualifications. They are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning the importance and need for personal hygiene procedures. Children wash their hands after using the toilet, playing with messy play activities or before eating. The staff use disposable gloves when changing baby's nappies. Children are kept safe from the spread of infection. A well-written sick child policy also helps avoid children's illnesses being passed on. Children are offered a good selection of meals. These are prepared and cooked daily at the adjoining school kitchen. The food is traditional as well as healthy and nutritious, for example meat, vegetables, pasta and fruit. At snack time children are able to choose from a selection of different fruit and drinks, such as milk and juice. They use individual cups and plates to help avoid cross-contamination. Children are able to help themselves to water throughout the day. This is readily available from a dispenser. Children's individual dietary needs are catered for. They are beginning to have an awareness of healthy eating issues.

At least two members of staff have attended first aid training. Accident and medication administration records are kept. If children sustain any minor injuries, they are dealt with effectively. However, a change in the accident record keeping procedures is being considered. Children use a good range of energetic, physical activities that help promote a healthy lifestyle. They are developing self-confidence in all their physical skills as they are able to use a wide range of indoor and outdoor toys and equipment. These include inter-locking shapes for balancing, play tunnels, bikes, using musical instruments, building tracks and mark-making. The outdoor play area is excellent. Children are able to use it every day and benefit from the fresh air and regular exercise. They are learning that they need to wait their turn to avoid hurting each other. Children really enjoy their physical play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright and clean environment. The layout of the nursery's play areas is very child-friendly. For example, there are plenty of child-sized toilet and washbasins. The good organisation of well-maintained toys and equipment means that children can move around safely and freely. They can also independently access suitable activities from tables, trays and storage units at child-height. The resources that the children play with and use are appropriate to their ages. They are checked regularly for safety, suitability and hygiene. The outside play areas are secure. Children have a good range of equipment to make their indoor and outdoor play a safe, stimulating and happy experience.

Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because staff are vigilant and use effective risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. For example, fences with bolted gates surround the outdoor play area and key pads entrance doors. There are records kept of children's sleep patterns and nappy changing times. Staff are developing a good understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits in the new nursery. A very good emergency evacuation procedure is in place. There is even a 'fire cot' in which very young children and babies can be quickly transported safely out of the building. The children are

learning some sense of danger and developing a basic knowledge about how to protect themselves from harm. Children are very well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give top priority to children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy the freedom to play both indoors and outside. Many of the toys and resources children play with are made from wood. This means they have solid and safe activities to play freely with. The home area has wooden child-sized furniture, for example a cooker and ironing board. Children enjoy acting out tasks they have observed, for example washing and ironing. They are beginning to achieve and gain confidence during their play. The staff are skilled and use their sound understanding of early years guidance, such as Birth to three matters and the Foundation Stage, to provide good quality care and learning opportunities. All the children are new to the nursery and are helped to settle by staff who are sensitive towards their individual needs. The slightly older children are more confident in the setting. Children have started to build relationships with each other and the staff. They play happily alongside and with each other. Children are learning to take turns and respond to others as they use physical equipment and resources. Staff awareness and close, caring relationships, increase children's sense of trust. This helps them develop a strong sense of self. Good quality adult-child interactions are supportive of early communication skills. A local librarian joins the group and introduces big 'Teddy' to children. They thoroughly enjoy singing and moving to action rhymes together. Children begin to make sense of the world and are given time to express their ideas as they join in different sensory play experiences, for example, using musical instruments and painting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed and are encouraged to play a full part in the nursery. Parents are encouraged to provide relevant information about their children. This means staff are able to ensure they have good knowledge of each child's needs. Children's behaviour is good. Staff support younger children and show them how to share and take turns. The nursery has set consistent boundaries for all the children. This helps them learn right from wrong and consider others feelings. Children respond to gentle reminders to care for their environment, the nursery's resources and each other. Children are able to gain a good understanding about the wider world and community through a colourful and wide range of dolls, figures and books. The nursery is developing effective procedures to enable them to care for children with additional needs, although none currently attend.

Staff have begun to build up good relationships with parents. They actively seek any information from parents about their children's needs, as well as their likes and dislikes. This contributes significantly to children's care and well-being when they attend the nursery. Staff talk to parents and make entries in a contact book, to help ensure all parents know how their children are progressing and developing. Staff are beginning to encourage parents involvement in their children's care and learning environment . Effective communication is developing through

newsletters, daily chats and detailed notice boards. This helps staff and parents work together to help provide continuity of care for children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery has their Ofsted registration certificate clearly displayed. There is a very effective staff recruitment and vetting procedure in place. This ensures that the adults are suitable to work with the children. Regular staff monitoring and supervision, along with planned annual appraisals, help ensure their professional and personal development and training needs are met. The setting's operational plan is new and is still being constantly adjusted and reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of the children and staff. The nursery manager has a degree in childhood studies. Most of the other staff are qualified to Level 2 or 3 (NVQ). Several members of staff have a current paediatric first aid course certificate. Children's and staff's individual records are stored confidentially in a lockable filing cabinet. All Children Act regulations are met and the required record-keeping is in place. There is an effective registration system for children, staff and visitors. The setting 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.

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 the details of any accidents children have are recorded appropriately and effectively.

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