



Rowan Sure Start Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY336016
Inspection date	25 January 2007
Inspector	Sarah Fletcher
Setting Address	The Rowans Children Centre, Moorfoot, Fullers Slade, Milton Keynes, MK11 2BN
Telephone number	01908 258052
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Registered person	Milton Keynes Council Day Nurseries
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Rowans Childrens Centre opened in 2006 to serve the local area of Fullers Slade and nearby residential estates. The centre comprises of a day nursery, which is open each weekday for 51 weeks of the year from 08.00 to 18.00; a crèche to support parents and carers attending the centre; and a variety of courses and drop-in support groups for parents, carers and their families.

All services are housed in a purpose-built building with outdoor play areas for the children. There are currently 21 children aged from three months up to five years on roll in the day nursery; three of these receive free early education. The crèche offers a maximum of 12 places and operates as required to support various adult groups that meet in the centre. Children who attend the crèche are mostly under three years of age. The setting welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language.

A board of trustees oversees the operations of the centre, including the management of the budget and recruitment of staff. There is an overall centre manager, who is supported by a management team which includes the day nursery manager, a part-time qualified teacher, a Children and Community Development Co-ordinator and a Quality and Early Years Development Officer.

There are four staff who work with the children in the day nursery. All staff have early years qualifications to level 2 or 3. In addition, three staff can be called on to work when the crèche is operating. There is a part-time nursery teacher who provides support in the day nursery.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because most of the staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. All accidents are fully recorded and signed by first aid trained staff and individual children's parents. Children are beginning to understand simple good health and hygiene practices, with staff helping children stay healthy by wiping young children's noses as often as possible. However, young children do not always have clean hands before and after eating snacks and some staff do not ensure that children cannot access spilled food at any time. Children benefit from good interaction during nappy changes, with staff alert to any health concerns relating to health and hygiene. Most staff follow nursery nappy changing procedures appropriately, ensuring there is no risk of cross infection, but these routines are not followed closely by all staff.

Children receive a healthy and nutritious diet with hot meals, such as roast dinners, curry and rice or hotpot with vegetables or snacks of fruit pieces or toast. Children eat their meals and snacks sitting together around tables with staff, who encourage them to learn to use appropriate cutlery, good manners and to develop their social skills. Children do not presently have free access to water throughout the day, but staff ask children if they are thirsty and offer water at regular intervals to babies. As older children have now started at the nursery, the manager plans to have a jug and cups available for children to help themselves.

Children have their health and dietary needs met because the staff work well with parents. Dietary needs are recorded and regularly discussed with parents, particularly when babies are weaning. Babies eat their snacks and meals in high chairs, where they can see the other children playing around them, although this can sometimes be for long periods. Some babies needing bottles are held whilst feeding, while others are given their bottle sitting in their high chair. After lunchtime, children are cleaned or clean themselves with individual flannels before their afternoon sleep. Although clean flannels are supplied for each child, some staff wipe more than one child's face and hands, resulting in possible cross infection.

Children enjoy physical play and activity each day, playing outside in a spacious and well equipped playground. They understand healthy living and readily wrap up in their coats, hats and gloves as it is frosty outside. Children rest and sleep according to their needs and parents' wishes in cots, their own buggies or on separate mattresses, with individual labelled bedding.

Regular checks on sleeping children are recorded carefully to enable sleeping patterns to be shared with parents on collection. A listening monitor is in place for clear awareness of sleeping children and staff know children's sleep routines well and how parents want them to settle, such as if children need a comforter or their back rubbing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe indoor and outdoor environment where they access and use suitable and safe equipment, which is carefully checked to meet appropriate safety standards. Rooms have suitable furniture for the age groups using them. For example, there are soft furnishings and low chairs in the baby room and child size chairs and tables in the pre-school area. Staff monitor children carefully and all rooms are checked on a daily basis for hazards and risks to children. For example, the kitchen, office and staff room are inaccessible to children and stairgates separate babies and toddlers from older children's resources and equipment. However, in the nappy changing room, there is no safety rail in place to prevent babies from rolling off the changing mat onto the floor.

Children learn to keep themselves safe and avoid accidental injury, with staff reminding children to take care when moving between the rooms. Outside, children are made safe through close supervision when playing on equipment and damp or icy patches are quickly made inaccessible to children. Secure door entry systems into both the Children's Centre and the nursery ensure children are safe from unvetted persons at all times.

Children's welfare is protected because the staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Staff have suitable training and knowledge of child protection issues and concerns. They know the importance of recording information and are able to demonstrate their understanding of signs of abuse. Pre-existing injuries are recorded and shared with parents to further protect children's welfare and well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and relax in the friendly atmosphere of the nursery and most children settle easily into the care of the staff. Newer children who are finding difficulty settling into the baby room, receive extra comfort and interaction to help them feel at ease. Children participate in activities which develop their existing skills and encourage new ones, although older children are currently receiving fewer opportunities for challenge than younger children. Children develop confidence and self-esteem from an early age, as the staff listen and talk to the children, valuing their contributions. Children use initiative and copy the adults around them. For example, an older child sits with a baby and gives her a rag book and a sealed bottle with water and glitter inside to tip and shake, before attempting to read her a story. Senior staff's strong knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework helps young children to take part in a variety of interesting activities, with stimulating and appropriate resources to help children progress and develop. For example, babies and toddlers enjoy discovering the contents of treasure baskets and thoroughly enjoy a body painting activity, where they can walk and crawl

in different colours of paint, before moving on to large sheets of paper and creating their own designs.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children who have recently joined the nursery and are in receipt of funded education are beginning to make satisfactory progress across the areas of learning, considering their different starting points at the nursery. Staff provide plans that link the Birth to three matters framework to the Foundation stage and are currently developing plans for suitable weekly activities to cover all areas of learning. Senior staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of the Foundation stage curriculum and are able to demonstrate how children's achievements will go forward into future planning to develop the next steps for children's learning. Strong support from the Children's Centre part-time teacher working with the children increases learning opportunities and gives staff time to assess children's developmental needs and plan appropriately. However, as staff in the pre-school room are currently caring for a mix of age groups, they are not always able to provide suitable structured activities or stimulation for older children.

Children have good social skills and interact well with staff and their peers. They are confident and approach adults for interaction. Children recognise the letters of their name and are developing their writing skills. A comfortable book area gives children opportunities to read and handle a selection of stories and non-fiction books. Children manage their own hygiene routines well, washing their hands and using the bathroom freely. During lunchtime children speak or sing to adults and their peers nearby, showing they are developing self-confidence. Children know and understand simple hygiene routines, washing and drying their hands for lunch, then sitting at the table ready to eat. Children are developing good manners through staff's positive encouragement and increasing their social skills talking with staff during meals.

Outside, children enjoy physical activity using a wide range of equipment to climb, balance and ride upon. They have many opportunities to become familiar with road safety, as a road layout with pedestrian crossing, road signs and large wooden cars is a permanent fixture of the playground. Children enjoy discovering changes in the weather and the effects on their environment. For example, children enjoy handling and talking about the ice formed on the top of the sandpit cover and the changes as the ice melts. Children enjoy creating their own art designs on the computer and following simple educational programmes, which develops their understanding of everyday technology. They are able to recognise numbers 1-9 around the room and outside and are beginning to learn the basics of calculation with staff's involvement.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children from differing backgrounds are welcomed into the nursery. They feel a sense of belonging and are becoming aware of our wider society through the developing range of resources which promote other cultures, gender roles and disabilities. Children make choices and take decisions in their play, with free access to a wide range of age appropriate toys, resources and equipment. Large artwork displays in all the children's rooms encourages them

to feel valued as individuals and helps to develop their confidence and self-esteem. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children are beginning to understand responsible behaviour and behaviour is generally good. Children work harmoniously with others, sharing and taking turns with the resources or play equipment outside. Staff ensure consistent and age appropriate behaviour management strategies are in use throughout the nursery, following clear guidance from company policies. All children receive appropriate support for their individual needs and are fully included in the nursery. Effective systems are in place to support children with special educational needs or those with English as an additional language, though none are currently attending. Trained staff with a clear understanding of children's individual education plans liaise with parents to ensure children receive good quality care. Children develop self-esteem and respect for others, helping staff to put on bibs on younger children at lunchtime or by helping to put on coats to go outside.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff work well with parents to meet individual children's needs and ensure they are included fully in the life of the nursery. Parents and staff share effective two-way communication to ensure children receive good quality care. Written information for parents is on display, together with a comprehensive parents' handbook and information about activities. Wall displays and photographs of children's work is on view all around the nursery. Ofsted contact details and the complaints procedure are easily available for parents on the noticeboard, together with weekly menus and routines for each age group. Parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child, completing profile forms at their induction, with staff's guidance. Parents are verbally informed of their child's progress and achievements and have access to their child's records on request. Staff are aware of the need to maintain privacy and confidentiality and sign their agreement during induction. Parents state they are happy with the quality of care their children receive and they find staff particularly helpful with following parents' requested feeding routines or areas of focus for their child's development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's welfare and well being are high priority to the strong team of core staff caring for children's needs. The nursery is making good use of the Birth to Three Matters framework and young children benefit from a wide range of interesting and stimulating experiences to aid their development. All staff working with children on a daily basis hold qualifications to appropriate childcare levels, along with most temporary staff.

However, staff deployment during domestic duties is sometimes inappropriate and some staff are left alone for short periods of time with too many children. As a result, children not always receiving suitable levels of care throughout the day. As the manager does not have suitable numbers of staff, she is involved in the domestic routines herself and does not always have sufficient awareness of staff that are caring for the children.

Policies and procedures are mostly well written and easily accessible to both staff and parents. Records and documentation relating to children's care is up-to-date, with systems in place to

ensure suitable adults cover periods of staff sickness, although registration systems are not always accurately maintained and not all incidents are recorded and shared with parents.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and contribute to children's progress towards the early learning goals. The nursery manager is enthusiastic, approachable and has good organisational skills, with a clear vision of where the nursery is aiming. Strong support from the registered person and the overall Children's Centre manager ensures the nursery is continuously improving and tackling any teething troubles, as it becomes established in the local community. Although the children in receipt of funded education are not currently receiving suitable levels of structured activities to enhance their learning, there is strong staff commitment to improve the care and education for all ages of children attending. Good levels of support from the part-time early years teacher are also helping the staff to develop the provision for nursery education. Senior staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation stage curriculum and are in the process of creating appropriate plans to provide structured activities across all areas of learning.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the 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 all staff follow appropriate health and hygiene guidelines throughout the nursery

- ensure nappy changing area has suitable safety precautions in place to prevent babies from rolling onto the floor
- improve staff deployment throughout the nursery to ensure all children receive appropriate levels of care at all times and ensure registration systems are accurately maintained and all incidents are recorded appropriately

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):

- develop the planning of the foundation stage to ensure children are able to progress through the stepping stones

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