

Six Bells Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY338271
Inspection date	28 June 2007
Inspector	Linda Patricia Coccia
Setting Address	The Six Bells, High Street, MARGATE, Kent, CT9 1JX
Telephone number	01843 591 200
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Registered person	Thanet Early Years Project LTD
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Crèche

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?

Six Bells Children Centre Crèche is one of six settings run by the Thanet Early Years Project Ltd. It opened in 2006 and operates from one room in a children's centre in Margate, Kent. A maximum of eight children may attend the crèche at any one time. The crèche may open for up to five days per week and offers crèche facilities to parents attending courses at the centre. Sessions run for a maximum of three hours up to twice a day.

There are currently 27 children aged from six months to under five years on roll. Children come from a local catchment area. The crèche currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The provider employs a bank of approximately 30 staff and ensures that at least three members of staff are present at each crèche session. The provider also ensures that at least half the staff manning each session hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good standards of hygiene are maintained within the provision. Parents provide their child's own drinking cup whenever possible. Crèche staff have their own cleaning routine, whilst also adhering to the centre's cleaning instructions. Flooring is mainly lino with a small soft carpeted area which is cleaned daily. Children are protected from cross infection. Good procedures are in place to help children become aware of personal hygiene issues. There are pictorial prompts in the toilet area and staff give regular verbal reminders. Staff are good role models as they and the children wash their hands before snack time. Children learn about personal hygiene. There are also good procedures in place to promote children's health. Children's accident and medication records are well maintained and stored appropriately. Children's individual health needs are noted on their record form and parents give written permission for emergency medical treatment for their child. Children's health records are well maintained.

Children's individual dietary needs are catered for. Children's requirements are noted on their record form. Staff are vigilant regarding any food that children eat, in particular, when parents provide cakes or biscuits for all of the children. Ingredients are fully scrutinised. Healthy and nutritious food such as carrots, bananas and grapes are offered to children at snack time. At least two staff members have attended suitable food hygiene courses within the past six months. Children's healthy eating is promoted.

Children are fully involved in physical play activities although they have no allocated outdoor play space. Children roll or bounce soft balls to each other or chase them on their own. Staff used small cones for children to negotiate their bodies around. Despite the small space the physical activities provided are suitable for children attending the crèche for only a couple of hours. Occasionally, when there only one or two children present during the session, children are taken to the local park. Staffing ratios are high on these occasions. Children enjoy their physical play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are looked after in a room which is bright and airy. It is brightly decorated with lots of children's work displayed around the walls which gives a lovely, colourful, warm atmosphere. Safety has been well considered. Entry doors have child proof, electronic locks, fitted up high. A fire guard is available when the heater is in use. Electrical sockets are all positioned up high on walls. Finally, no unauthorised persons are allowed in the room. Children are looked after in rooms which are secure, safe and suitable.

Children use a range of very solid, sturdy equipment. Small wooden tables and chairs are used by children. Toys are stored in large plastic containers or appropriate drawer storage units. Children are easily able to access their toys. All toys appear well maintained, very clean and fresh looking. Staff use regular cleaning procedures to ensure toys are hygienic for babies. Therefore, children are able to use equipment freely.

There are good procedures in place to protect children in emergencies. Emergency evacuation drills are practised by staff and children on a regular basis. Their priority is to get out, not to fight a fire, and a fire exit is available from the room. The fire drill book is well maintained. All

drills are recorded and evaluated. Children have the opportunity to keep themselves safe in an emergency.

Children are protected by the good procedures which are in place to keep them safe from abuse and neglect. Staff have a good understanding of the provider's internal safeguarding children policy. The provider has a written statement which is shared with parents in the information leaflet. A Local Authority procedures poster is displayed on the crèche wall. Staff have recently attended internal training sessions regarding Safeguarding Children. Children's existing injuries are recorded and records are stored confidentially. A well thought out departure policy is also in place to ensure children are collected by persons nominated by their parents. Passwords are required, as well as advance notice from parents. Children's wellbeing is promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are looked after by staff who are caring and show good concern for children. Staff smile and encourage conversation as they welcome children onto the premises. Children settle well. Many give happy smiles to staff, including the babies who beam at them. Staff get to know the children well and converse with them about their home lives and any other provision they may attend. For example, one staff member encouraged a four year old to tell everyone about a helicopter visit planned for that afternoon at his playgroup. He was very excited. The staff member prompted him with some good descriptive language as they imagined what would happen that afternoon. Children are becoming skilful communicators.

Children use a good range of toys and equipment which are suitable for their ages. Staff carry out regular snapshot observations on the children. The observations are then used to help staff choose appropriate toys and activities for them. Staff use well considered activity plans which are in accordance with the Birth to three matters framework. Children's developmental needs are considered.

Children use a variety of toys and activities which ensures that young children progress in all areas of their development. The soft floor area is very welcoming to babies. Soft cushions give support for those children who are just learning to sit up. Soft toys, rattles and shakers ensure that babies are kept occupied and interested. The home corner includes dressing up clothes, cooking utensils and play food which encourage children to role play. This helps them to become competent learners.

Children also have opportunities to use messy play activities such as corn flour, water and sand. They mix and pour and feel the different textures. One child said 'this is good' as the corn flour melted through his fingers. A toddler enjoyed the water play, dropping small items into the water to watch them float. Children self select musical instruments to bang and blow. A musical telephone gave a staff member the opportunity to sing some songs with the children as they played their instruments. Children have access to a variety of interesting activities and enjoy their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children use a range of good quality toys and see images which show positive images of equality every time they attend. Staff promote gender equality as they encourage all children to use all toys. For example, boys use dolls and cook meals in the home corner. The crèche is able to

cater for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The building is disability friendly and some of the staff are able to use basic Makaton. The provider has a written disability policy and provides a fully trained Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. Children's individual needs are met.

Good behaviour management strategies are in place to help children learn about their behaviour. A well written behaviour management policy details these. Staff mainly use distraction with babies and toddlers but they use discussion with older children to help the children understand why their behaviour is undesirable. The written policy also includes information on how bullying is dealt with. Children negotiate their behaviour with staff. For example, one child sometimes bring toys from home. He has agreed with staff that when he does he must share his toys. Children receive lots of praise and positive reinforcement for good behaviour. Children build good self esteem and play within well defined boundaries.

Staff work closely with parents. An information pack is given to all parents as they enrol. It covers a wealth of general information to provide parents with reassurance about the care their children receive. It itemises the procedures which involve parents in the running of the crèche. Parents have to sign to say they have received a copy of the procedures. Good procedures are in place to promote the Birth to three matters framework with parents. Posters and booklets are available. Parents can also see their child's observations whenever they want. Children benefit from continuity of care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provider has good procedures in place to ensure staff working with children are suitable to do so. Rigorous and robust recruitment and vetting procedures are used as part of the Operational Plan which is maintained at the provider's head office. It is made clear to parents in the written information provided that some paperwork is available on request. It is noted that policies and procedures are regularly updated and sometimes have to wait for approval by the committee. However, the crèche's outings procedure is not available at the provision for staff to use and parents to see.

The provider has all regulatory paperwork in place, which is well maintained. The crèche staff display their Ofsted Registration certificate on the door. Children and staff's attendance times are recorded. The crèche has an uncollected child policy, which advises parents when the local Social Services department may become involved, but the lost child procedures could be made clearer for the benefit of staff and children. Staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications and attend a variety of internal workshops and training courses to keep their knowledge up to date. All children's records are stored appropriately and remain confidential between staff and parents. 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):

- review the lost child policy to ensure information is made clearer for staff and parents
- ensure a copy of the outings procedure is kept on the premises

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