

Childcare Shiremoor

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	310203
Inspection date	23 May 2007
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Registered person	North Tyneside Council Community Services
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 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?

Childcare Shiremoor is owned and managed by North Tyneside Council and consists of full day care and a crèche. Each provision has a separate management structure. The nursery has been open since 1992, the accommodation is purpose built with an enclosed outdoor play area. The building was extended in 2005 and became a Sure Start Children's Centre.

The nursery provides care and education for 58 children aged under five, with funded nursery education available for three and four-year-olds. The nursery is open 52 weeks of the year, excluding Bank holidays, 07:30 to 18:00, Monday to Friday. There are currently 104 children on the register. The staff team consists of a manager, deputy and 20 members of staff who work directly with the children. The whole of the staff team hold appropriate qualifications in the care and education of children, the majority are qualified to level three, whilst the others are working towards a level three qualification. The crèche may provide care for 16 children aged under eight and is staffed by a pool of crèche workers supplied by the local authority. The crèche operates as required to enable parents and carers to access training on site.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a warm and welcoming environment where they begin to learn about the importance of good hygiene and personal care throughout their daily routine. Consistent adult support and guidance helps children to gain a good understanding of hygiene and become increasingly independent in their personal care, for example, washing their hands before a snack, after messy play and after using the toilet. Staff present as very positive role models for the children and make consistent use of regular routines to support and reinforce good hygiene practice. There is a good nappy changing routine in place for babies and toddlers. The nappy changing area is kept clean and well ordered, staff wear disposable gloves and aprons, dispose of nappies hygienically and disinfect mats after use.

The majority of staff hold a valid first aid certificate and most have also completed training in basic food hygiene. This helps safeguard children's welfare. Good hygiene standards are maintained by staff that have a clear understanding of related policies and procedures which are very well implemented. For example, staff ensure that the facilities, resources and equipment used by children are kept clean and in good order through regular checks and cleaning routines. This helps maintain a healthy environment for the children. A clear written policy regarding sick children, information on communicable diseases and the effective recording of all accidents and emergency contacts, further promotes children's health and well-being, positively safeguarding children.

The nursery advocates a healthy eating programme. Children are offered a varied and nutritious menu and staff actively encourage the children to try different foods. This helps to promote and maintain children's good health. Staff and parents discuss any specific dietary requirements a child may have whether for religious, cultural or medical reasons and the relevant information is recorded. Children show a growing awareness of the benefit of a healthy diet, this being reinforced through a healthy eating awareness month which the nursery ran in February. Babies are fed in keeping with their own individual routine and food is served in a form that is appropriate to their age, chopped or mashed as required. Written information about what younger children have had to eat and drink is shared with parents through their child's individual daily record. This helps to foster good partnerships with parents and ensure that their wishes are met. Children have free access to drinks throughout the day, have their own labelled water bottles and are offered suitable drinks, such as water and milk.

Outdoor play is a central part of the daily routine for all age groups and a good variety of physical activities are provided for all children. This helps to promote and enhance their physical development. For example, children enjoy making paths with wooden blocks, building dens, running around, playing with balls and using the large slide and climbing apparatus. Each playroom, including the crèche room has access directly onto an enclosed outdoor area which the children are able to access at all times, making the transition between indoors and out seamless. Staff acknowledge the benefits children obtain from frequent access to fresh air and regular exercise to support their physical development. Children are encouraged to make full use of the resources and activities provided and to test their capabilities within a safe and very supportive environment. Children are able to rest and be active according to their individual needs. Home sleep routines of babies and toddlers are carefully followed, they are made comfortable and enjoy well supervised, uninterrupted sleep periods.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very secure environment where they are supervised very closely by staff at all times. This enables the children to move freely and independently. Children are well protected because the setting has good safety procedures which are understood and effectively implemented by staff. They have a very good understanding of the action to be taken regarding a lost or uncollected child. There are effective security systems for entry into the building, and both the arrival and collection of the children is well planned. There is an up to date record in place of persons with permission to collect children and parents let staff know if there is someone different collecting the children. Visitors are required to sign in and out of the nursery, with staff ensuring they have no unsupervised access to children. This helps keep children safe.

Internally, many safety measures have been taken with radiator guards and socket covers in place, although these were missing from some of the sockets in the pre-school room, which impacts on the overall safety of the children in this room. Staff are very vigilant regarding safety and effectively implement procedures to minimise risks. For example, they ensure that risk assessments of the facilities and resources are carried out each day, prior to the children's arrival. The process of visual risk assessment is ongoing throughout the day. Electrical and fire safety equipment is regularly checked and kept in a safe condition, and there are good fire safety procedures in place, with up to date records of practice evacuations. There is a comprehensive outings policy in place, which details effective safety procedures, including maintaining ratios, carrying a mobile phone and contact details, as well as taking other appropriate equipment including drinks, snacks and sun creams as necessary. Written consent from parents is obtained prior to any outing.

Staff help older children to develop an awareness of the need to preserve their own well-being and that of others. This is achieved by gentle reminders from staff, such as requests to pick up toys from the floor in case someone trips on them and hurts themselves. Children respond very well to these requests and it helps them take some responsibility for keeping themselves and others safe.

Children are well protected by staff who are very confident and secure in their knowledge of child protection policies and procedures. Suitable information, a clear written policy and referral forms are in place, which ensure children's welfare is appropriately protected. In addition, all staff have recently undertaken safeguarding children courses.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff build very good relationships with the children. They provide a very welcoming, stimulating and inclusive environment where all children are acknowledged and respected as individuals. Children interact with staff in a relaxed and warm manner and they build very good relationships with their peers. All children have easy access to a wide range of resources and well planned meaningful activities to support and enhance their learning and development. Children are motivated and enthusiastic learners. For example, children aged two to three thoroughly enjoy a planting activity. They work extremely well together and enjoy exploring the soil, helping to ensure the plants are bedded in. All children have very regular opportunities to take part in a broad range of activities to stimulate and promote their sensory development effectively. They enjoy listening to music and also take part in tactile activities. For example, babies and toddlers have the opportunity to explore paint freely and totally uninhibited, enjoying the experience

of paint on their hands and feet. Older babies have free access to an indoor potting area where they are able to dig and play in the soil, filling pots and wheel barrows. Staff working with children under three show a good awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, and have implemented it fully. All children are well supported and benefit greatly from the very good quality interaction with staff. Staff are well motivated and have a comprehensive knowledge of childcare and development. This has a positive impact on children's learning and achievements and children are confident with high self-esteem.

All playrooms, including the crèche room are set out effectively to promote children's independence and staff rotate resources to ensure a good variety of opportunities are provided.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are well supported and helped to gain confidence in their abilities and build positive relationships through their interactions with staff and their peers. There is opportunity for children to participate in a wide range of new and stimulating experiences and they are encouraged to take an active role in the group. Staff communicate well with children using clear and simple language, which in turn helps children to learn and develop well.

Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage, early learning goals and the six areas of learning. There is effective planning in place and this is appropriately linked to the stepping stones and is developed in line with the principles of the Foundation Stage. Key workers regularly monitor and observe children as they participate in activities and use this to inform future activities, ensuring they are sensitive to the differing needs of each child. The room is well organised and set out, ensuring children have effective learning experiences as well as lots of fun. Staff use effective teaching methods and tools, for example, the organisation of the play areas reflect the areas of learning and there are lovely displays of children's work on the walls. Staff make very good use of open ended questions to encourage children to extend their thoughts and ideas and to solve simple problems. Staff prepare well for the sessions and ensure that there is a balanced range of activities in keeping with the six areas of learning, whilst achieving a balance between planned activity and additional free play. Staff manage children effectively, valuing their contributions and adapting activities to ensure that all children are able to participate. Children's achievements are well recorded and there is good use made of photographic evidence to support written observations. Children's assessment files do not currently identify the next steps in each child's learning. This has an impact on the effectiveness of planning for the specific needs of individual children.

Children have an extremely positive attitude to activities and are eager to take part. They have clearly formed close relationships with the staff, are self-assured and have high self-esteem. For example, they speak confidently within the group, are happy to approach visitors, ask questions and show them round the nursery, relate well to their friends and play together happily. Children are kind and share well, talking together about how nice it is to have friends at nursery. All children help to tidy up when asked by staff, they know where things go and successfully put toys away. Children show developing independence and are able to decide to put their fleeces on if they are cold outside and help prepare the fruit for snack time.

Children are confident speakers and express their feelings, ideas and needs most readily. For example, they talk about how cold and slimy the snails feel on their hands. Children thoroughly enjoy looking at books and their listening skills are developing well. For example, they pay close attention during story sessions, answering questions correctly and can follow simple

instructions. Children are beginning to recognise and name letters, such as those in their names or on labels displayed in the playroom. They are also beginning to link them to the correct letter sound. They successfully find their names and pictures on their self-registration cards as they enter nursery. Children have frequent opportunities to practise early writing skills as they hold pencils correctly and practise drawing lines at the writing table. Children are starting to form recognisable letters and some write their first name unaided.

Children count from one to 12 with confidence and some children are able to count beyond this. They are also learning to count backwards and are adept at doing this from 10 following a recent space project where they practised counting backwards for the rocket launch. Children are beginning to identify written numbers, such as those on the computer and date board. They also show a growing awareness of concepts, such as addition and subtraction. Children can identify which group of items has more or less and confidently use simple mathematical language, such as small, smallest, big and biggest. One child in a small group playing with the garden snails correctly identified the biggest and smallest snail in the collection.

Children show a good understanding of how things grow, talking about how their sunflower needed water and light so that the seed would grow into a plant. They also understand that they need to care for living things, helping to clean out the snails home and chop up leaves and banana for them to eat, as well as making sure all their plants are watered outside. This has been reinforced through a recent growing topic. Children are able to differentiate about past and present and recall past events with ease.

Children have lots of opportunity to use large physical equipment and to manipulate small tools freely. For example, during outdoor play they confidently balance on wooden blocks, play on the slide and climb up the large apparatus. They use rolling pins, glue spreaders, pencils and crayons successfully. Children are also able to express themselves freely and creatively through a very good range of media and activities, such as paint, collage, sand, model making, dough, music and movement. All children are well supported and very well challenged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are valued as individuals and staff help them to settle quickly by tailoring their admission to the setting according to their individual needs. All children have easy access to a good variety of resources and activities. Staff place particular emphasis on promoting and nurturing children's independence skills. For example, older children are encouraged to serve themselves at lunch and tea time, and help to cut up fruit for snack. Staff are calm, competent and good role models. They sensitively support, praise and encourage all children, promoting their self-esteem, confidence and sense of belonging. Children are very polite, well behaved and enthusiastic to take part in all aspects of nursery life. Children listen and respect staff and appropriate supervision ensures that even the youngest children are beginning to learn right from wrong and how to share and be kind to one another. Children's behaviour is very well managed by staff with a clear understanding of how to use age appropriate strategies in a consistent manner.

The nursery is proactive in its approach to children with learning difficulties or disabilities. Most of the staff have previous experience of caring for children with such needs and show a good understanding in this area. There are good opportunities for children to learn about the world around them through a variety of planned activities and play materials. For example, children participated enthusiastically in a recent themed workshop based on the book 'Handa's surprise'.

Older children also enjoy making passports, exploring the world through a range of planned activity days which to date have seen them visit Australia, Mexico, and Ireland. Staff aim to ensure that activities within the nursery reflect the culture and background of all children who attend. Children further have access to a range of multicultural toys, books and images that reflect positive non-stereotypical roles, racial and cultural diversity and disability. This helps to raise children's awareness of diversity. Children also benefit from outings into the local community which helps to develop their awareness of the local environment. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff clearly recognise the importance of working closely with parents to ensure that children's needs are very well met. Parents receive good quality, comprehensive written information about the setting and the policies and procedures in place. Copies of these are made available to parents as well as lots of other relevant literature. For example, activity plans, daily routines, menus, the registration and insurance certificates are all clearly displayed. Parents have access to their child's records which includes detailed information about their child's developmental progress. All parents receive regular written and verbal feedback from the staff as well as a six monthly review on progress. Parents are actively encouraged to keep staff informed of any important information that may impact on the care or progress of their child. This enables staff to work in partnership with parents and ensures that children's needs are best met. Feedback from parents is also extremely positive. In particular, they comment on the friendly, supportive and welcoming staff, the good variety of activities on offer, the excellent healthy menu and the good progress that they feel their children are making.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for and feel at home in a well organised setting that keeps them safe and secure. The walls are filled with beautiful examples of children's work, a reflection of how their contributions are valued and self-esteem promoted.

Children benefit from the support of well qualified staff, who are committed to attending relevant training courses to enhance their ongoing personal development. The nursery and crèche have a comprehensive collection of policies and procedures in place, which are understood by all staff, updated regularly and shared with parents. All relevant records are in place, easily accessible and up to date, ensuring individual care is provided. Documentation is well organised and presented and confidentiality maintained. Positive links with parents ensure they are kept up to date about their child's learning and progress.

Leadership and management is good. The manager is totally committed to the staff and children and this is reflected in the effective and enthusiastic management of the setting. All staff work well together and day to day management is very good. The educational planning and assessment systems are effective and aim to meet the individual needs of the children. Committed to improvement, the manager works closely with her team to identify areas for further development and strategies to improve these. Effective recruitment and vetting procedures are in place, ensuring children are well protected, and good induction systems and regular staff planning meetings are established. A high priority is given to ongoing personal development and staff are well supported and given clear direction through team meetings, staff consultations and the open door style of management used. Staff are committed to the ongoing improvement of the setting and are very well motivated, ensuring that the care of the children and the service delivered is of high quality.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection it was recommended that the arrival and departure times of all children are recorded in the nursery, the crèche policies and procedures are on the premises and readily available for inspection and the complaints procedure of the nursery and crèche include Ofsted's contact details.

All these issues have been addressed and good progress made in all areas. Attendance registers clearly show the arrival and departure times of all children attending nursery, and the crèche policies and procedures are available for inspection. In addition, the complaints procedure of both the nursery and the crèche contains Ofsted's contact details and these are also displayed in the entrance foyer of the setting.

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 complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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 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 sockets are protected with socket covers.

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):

- further develop children's assessment files to include a record of the next steps in each child's learning.

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