



East/West Children Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	508437
Inspection date	13 February 2007
Inspector	Vivienne Dempsey
Setting Address	Abingdon Road, Middlesbrough, Cleveland, TS1 3JR
Telephone number	01642 227140
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Registered person	East/West Children Centre
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?

East West Children's Centre has been registered since February 2001. It operates from a purpose built setting adjoining Abingdon Road Primary School in the centre of Middlesbrough. The children's centre serves the local multi-cultural community and staff with bi-lingual skills work at the setting. During term-time children from the centre can have a two course lunch provided by the primary school canteen. The children's centre offers full day care for children from six weeks to five years, there are currently 80 children on roll. The setting is in receipt of nursery education grants and there are nine funded three year olds currently on roll. The setting will soon be piloting funding for eight two year olds from April 07. Many of the children attending speak English as an additional language and the setting supports children with learning difficulties and /or disabilities. The children's centre operates 8.00 to 18 00 five days a week all year round. Sessions are also available from 9:00 to 11:30, a lunchtime session of 11:30 to 12:30 and 12:30 to 15:00. Twelve members of staff are employed, all have a childcare

qualification, all staff have access to ongoing training and development programmes. In April 2005 the registration of the Sure Start crèche and East/West Children's Centre combined to become the day care element of a designated Children's Centre.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Effective health and hygiene practices are in place which promote children's health. For example, young children learn and older children understand good hand washing practices as part of the daily routine, "I washed me hands to get the germs off." Staff ensure children stay healthy as they follow current and appropriate health and hygiene procedures by wearing protective clothing when changing nappies. A good standard of cleanliness is maintained throughout the nursery ensuring the children's good health is promoted at all times. Organised procedures are in place for recording accidents and the administration of medication. Parents sign to acknowledge entry, keeping them informed at all times.

Plenty of opportunities are available for children to take part in physical activities. They enjoy walks to the local play area, library and park and benefit from the use of an outdoor area which is easily accessible from the childcare rooms. Children have independent access to fresh drinking water throughout the day. They are well nourished as the school canteen provides a wide range of healthy foods at meal times. Staff encourage children to serve their own meals, supporting and developing children's independence. Children enjoy their meals and eat well together, making meal times a sociable occasion.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Very good steps have been taken to ensure that children are cared for in a safe environment. For example, the premises, including the outside play area, are kept secure. A record of visitors is maintained and risk assessments have been conducted. The environment is extremely warm and welcoming for the children and they all have easy access to a good range of toys, equipment and furniture. Toys and resources are appropriate to the children's developmental stages and interests, keeping them motivated and interested.

An emergency evacuation procedure is in place, regular fire drills are practised and a written log is maintained. This develops children's awareness of fire safety. Children are appropriately protected because staff understand their role in relation to child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Staff have a good understanding of the different areas of abuse, of possible signs and of the procedures that are in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident within the setting. They enjoy close and warm relationships with staff who know them well, which increases their sense of well-being and security. Staff

provide good levels of support which enable the children to experience a wide range of activities that contribute to their development and learning. For example, staff support younger children appropriately when making models and painting them. Staff are very caring in their approach and spend time playing with the children and interacting with them. This means children have good self-esteem and enjoy their time at the centre. Children engage in a broad range of activities, which enhance their development, such as, sand, water, dough, role play and parachute games. There is a good balance between adult-directed and child-initiated activities. Plans for younger children incorporate the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff use observations to record children's development, however, observations are not used to inform future planning and next steps in children's learning, therefore, planned activities do not always meet their individual learning needs. Children's development records are well maintained and staff date entries to show progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the 'Foundation Stage' Curriculum and use this to plan a balanced range of activities across the six areas of learning. This meets most children's individual learning and development needs. However, plans do not include differentiation for different ages and abilities. Therefore, staff do not always provide the opportunities for all children to take their learning forward. Staff regularly maintain assessment records which show children's progress towards the early learning goals.

Children have a good level of independence in selecting and carrying out activities. They show high levels of curiosity and are interested in what they do. Children persist for extended periods of time in their chosen activities. They become increasingly independent when dealing with their own physical needs. For example, they put on their coats before going outside to keep themselves warm, see to their personal hygiene and serve themselves at meal-times.

Children enjoy a range of story and book sharing opportunities, they handle books carefully, hold them correctly and turn pages. Children are beginning to say initial sound of words, encouraged by staff at story time and during daily activities. Staff provide opportunities for children to develop their mark making skills and some children are forming recognisable letters. Children are beginning to recognise some numerals and staff promote the recognition of numerals and shapes in small group activities.

Children make sense of the world around them as they talk about the weather and go on walks in the local area, such as visiting the local library and parks. Although there are limited opportunities for the children to explore and investigate natural objects. Therefore, limiting their opportunities to investigate natural objects and fully developing all their senses. Children have access to a computer and are able to complete simple programmes with adult support.

Children enjoy a range of physical activities, they confidently use the outdoor climbing frame and slide. They use wheeled toys carefully avoiding each other and showing clear spatial awareness. Opportunities are available for children to develop their fine motor skills as they use single handed tools and utensils with increasing competence, for example, scissors, glue sticks and paint brushes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a positive attitude towards others as staff promote equal opportunities very well. All children are included and involved, their individual needs are extremely well met. Staff have an excellent understanding of the individual needs, abilities, likes and dislikes of the children in their care. Some staff are bilingual which enables them to ensure children with English as an additional language are fully included. Appropriate procedures are in place for the identification and assessment of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The named coordinator has attended relevant training. Some children also have the support of an inclusion worker to ensure they are fully included and their individual needs are met.

Children thoroughly enjoy the nursery and the activities available. They are settled and happy and enjoy very good relationships with staff and good relationships with peers. They are very well behaved and staff demonstrate a good understanding of how to manage children's behaviour and they receive lots of positive praise and encouragement. This means children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with their parents. Parents receive information about the curriculum and the areas of learning in leaflets and daily discussions. They can access their children's development files on request, this keeps parents informed of their child's progress and development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Effective recruitment and appointment procedures are used to ensure staff working with children are appropriately cleared and have suitable qualifications. In-depth health checks are also undertaken which enhance vetting procedures. Staff provide a well organised environment which contributes to the children being happy and settled. The space both indoors and outdoors supports children's learning and development, allowing them to move around freely and independently. A well organised key worker system is in place and adult-to-child ratios are maintained. Appropriate records, policies and procedures are in place and used effectively to support consistency of care for the children.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Children benefit from the commitment of the management and the centre's team to provide good quality education. The staff team share responsibility for the delivery of the curriculum. Weekly meetings ensure staff work closely together to plan and develop the provision they provide. Children's progress is monitored and staff regularly update their development files and assessment records. Staff regularly attend appropriate training to develop and enhance their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to ensure the outdoor play area is secure and to improve the effectiveness of procedures for vetting new members of staff. Staff have ensured that the outside area is secure, large locks are now in place securing the outside area. Vetting procedures have now been reviewed. Procedures now include in-depth health checks, police checks, reference requests, qualifications and employment history. Ensuring staff who work with children are suitable to do so.

Complaints since the last inspection

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. 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.

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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 observations are used to inform future planning and next steps in children's learning.

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 plans further to include differentiation in activities for different ages and abilities
- provide natural objects for children to explore and investigate.

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