

Children's Choice at Southridge

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY275280
Inspection date	18 April 2007
Inspector	Jasmin Myles-Wilson
Setting Address	Southridge First School, Cranleigh Place, Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear, NE25 9UD
Telephone number	0191 2008709 ex 106
E-mail	
Registered person	Children's Choice Nursery Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional 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?

Children's Choice at Southridge is one of two childcare provisions privately owned by Children's Choice Nursery. It opened in January 2004 and is located within the grounds of Southridge Primary School in Whitley Bay. It operates from two separate buildings. The playgroup is based in a demountable structure and the wrap-around care is based inside the school premises, parallel to the school nursery. The setting has access to an appropriate outdoor play area.

The setting is registered to provide care for a maximum of 48 children at any one time. There are currently 90 children on roll from two to five years. Of these, 13 children receive funding for nursery education. Wrap-around care is provided for 51 weeks of the year and is open Monday to Friday from 08.00 until 18.00. The playgroup is open for 37 weeks of the year to run concurrently with school term times. Sessions run Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 09.10 until 11.40 and Monday and Wednesday afternoons from 12.20 until 14.50. Staff walk to collect children from the school nursery. The setting provides placements for students.

The setting serves the local community and surrounding areas with the majority of children moving on to the school. There are four staff who work with the children in the wrap-around care, three of whom hold level three qualifications. The other member of staff holds a level two and is currently working towards a level three qualification. Of the four staff who work in the playgroup, two hold a level three qualification and one is working towards a suitable qualification. The provision has established links with the school and also receives support through the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well established daily routine practices. For example, as children wash their hands staff give simple explanations as to why it is necessary. Young children are supported by staff to carry out personal hygiene tasks. Staff ensure the premises are a healthy environment for children to be in and are good visible role models. There is a good procedure in place to care for sick children and to ensure the spread of infection is minimal. Injured children receive effective care and all staff are knowledgeable about how to deal with minor accidents.

A healthy eating programme is followed and promoted. Children help themselves to the nutritious food provided, so they receive a realistic amount of food. Their dietary requirements are met according to parental wishes, for example, children who do not eat meat are given an alternative choice. They also have access to healthy snacks and drinks throughout the day. Children are developing a good awareness of nutritious foods as they discuss and do interesting related activities. For example, they help to prepare and make vegetable soup, which they then eat.

Children experience a high level of vigorous exercise and physical challenges through outdoor play, trips and activities, such as dancing and playing football. This is clearly seen as activities are featured well in the activity plans and the structure of the day, which staff devise. The outdoor area is extremely well-planned and children make the most of this and access fresh air. Children are gaining control over their bodies and a good sense of space as they run, jump and ride bikes without bumping into each other. They use equipment well that requires hand and eye coordination, for example, children use knives correctly to cut up vegetables for the soup they are making. Children's emotional well-being is encouraged and developed as they spend time together in small groups or pairs and young children have staff who consistently care for them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well maintained, caring, safe and secure environment. They are safe and secure because staff are vigilant and thoroughly carry out risk assessments as a precautionary measure to prevent children sustaining injuries. They give high priority to children's safety and encourage children to develop an understanding of keeping themselves safe. For example, staff tell children how to use the climbing frame correctly so that they keep themselves safe. Children are keen to help maintain a healthy and safe environment and volunteer themselves to put resources away.

Children have access to a wide and varied range of clean indoor and outdoor resources and equipment, which are of good quality and offer good levels of challenge appropriate for children's age and stage of development. The way the resources are organised, in low-level boxes, drawers and shelves, means that children can easily access and select activities of their choice.

Staff have a good knowledge of and fully understand child protection issues. They are confident and competent about their role and responsibilities, therefore, children are safeguarded and their welfare is protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy coming to the setting. They settle extremely well and are engaged in a wide range of activities and play opportunities which helps to promote their overall development. Staff make good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to improve children's achievements. Planning and children's assessments are used to provide interesting activities which help children progress towards the next stage of learning for them. Children quickly engage in a good range of activities and projects. They are encouraged to choose activities of interest to them which promotes independence. Young children enjoy using their senses to explore different textures, such as paint or play dough. Staff know when to support children in activities. They communicate well with children by using small chatter, lots of eye contact and facial expressions, therefore, warm relationships develop.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress as they benefit from staff's secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff work well together to create an environment that motivates and interests children. They utilise well the support gained from the early years teacher and effectively plan a good range of activities to move children forward in their development. Opportunities are given to children to become independent but opportunities are sometimes missed for children to make choices about their self-care. Staff are good role models and listen to children treating them with respect, therefore, children learn to listen to and respect others. They are skilled in helping children's thinking to develop further by giving them sentence starters or asking open-ended questions. Staff use developmental files to record what children can do, from this they are able to make informed decisions regarding children's next steps.

Children happily enter the group and get along well with each other. They are keen to be involved in activities and persist in ones of their choice. They develop positive friendships and freely share their experiences, such as a trip to the Sea Life Centre. Children behave positively towards others and are confident to approach adults whilst in a safe environment. They greet and welcome each other at circle time and are developing good listening skills. Good links between the playgroup and the school nursery means that children benefit from socialising with each other. Children competently express themselves and initiate conversations with adults and other children. They select stories they like to read and handle them with care. Older children are beginning to develop early writing skills as they trace around letters corresponding with their names. They confidently take part in counting activities, while the younger children happily engage in singing rhymes, with actions, to help them develop their knowledge of numbers.

A good balance of indoor and outdoor activities means that children have and enjoy good opportunities to exercise their physical bodies. The outdoor area is planned so that the six areas of learning can be accessed, therefore, children's learning is reinforced. Children show enjoyment at using musical instruments to make sounds, they dance and enthusiastically join in singing songs they are familiar with.

Children have good opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding of their community and the wider world. They explore things, such as different foods from other countries, or look at insects, such as caterpillars. Often children's learning is extended through stories and a range of other interesting activities, such as visiting places like the beach or having visitors come to the setting. They show interest in learning facts that are not blatantly obvious to them, for example, they learn that when the lights are switched out a fly will head towards the light from the window. Children are developing a sense of time as staff inform children how long they have before they are asked to stop what they are doing and tidy away. Children learn and become acquainted with what is expected of them, such as wearing aprons when doing creative activities. They operate simple equipment safely, such as the computer or knives and forks, and are becoming skilled at using them.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from staff's sound knowledge of equality and diversity which is actively promoted through activities, the display of positive images and treating children as individuals. This encourages children to appreciate differences and to learn to be polite and respectful of others. Children's individual needs are effectively met in a variety of ways, for example, staff use information received from parents and also their own observations of the children. At present, there are no children attending the setting who have learning difficulties or disabilities, however, there are good systems in place to support them. Children have good opportunities to learn about the wider world and their local community. They regularly go on outings to find out about their local community, for example, they visit the beach. Members from the community are invited into the setting to talk to children about what they do, for example, the local fire brigade.

Staff are very good role models and are calm, therefore, children learn what behaviour is acceptable. Staff have a good knowledge of effective strategies to manage behaviour to encourage children to behave positively. However, staff do not always explain to children why they should not do something, for example, when children are climbing on tables they are just taken off without an explanation. Children develop self-esteem and confidence as they receive lots of praise when they behave well, follow rules or achieve something. For example, children clap one another when they sing a song by themselves. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnerships with parents are good. They have a friendly rapport and information is shared and obtained so children are effectively cared for. Because staff have an approachable manner, parents feel confident to share concerns. Staff and parents work well together to ensure success in meeting children's individual needs. Parents are encouraged to be involved and are given information to keep them well-informed about what is happening within the setting and the education provided. This is done in a variety of ways, such as letters, verbal communication and noticeboards. Children's educational progress is shared with parents on an informal basis.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the well planned and organised setting. They are able to develop a sense of independence and self confidence within this environment as they move around safely. Children from both groups socialise together and this makes transition from playgroup to the wraparound facility much easier because of the good links between the two groups. Staff have a good awareness of the setting's policies and procedures. They are aware that policies, such as behaviour management and child protection are there for the protection of children. Documentation is well organised, confidentially stored and is regularly reviewed. Parents work in partnership with staff, to ensure children are signed in and out on the daily registration system.

The leadership and management of the nursery is good. The manager is a good role model to staff and leads them well through her hands on approach. Staff are valued and work closely with the manager and are competent to run the setting in her absence. They know their roles and responsibilities and are committed to providing a good service. Good procedures are in place to ensure new staff, students and volunteers are aware of what is expected of them. Staff work well together, therefore, children are happy and are cared for in a stimulating and caring environment. Staff evaluate how they can improve learning opportunities for children and help them progress in their development. They are keen to receive support and advice to help them deliver the Foundation Stage curriculum, competently and effectively.

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 recommendations were made for the setting to devise a suitable behaviour management statement regarding bullying, to continue working towards ensuring 50 percent of staff achieve a level two qualification and to develop resources which reflect diversity and the backgrounds of children attending the provision.

The setting has successfully completed the recommendations made at the last inspection. A suitable bullying policy is now in place which helps to keep children safe and protected from violence. The majority of permanent staff now hold an early years qualification, therefore, children are cared for more effectively. Resources reflecting positive images and depicting diversity are accessible to children, so that children learn about their community and the wider world.

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 complaint 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):

- continue to develop consistency in behaviour management strategies used.

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 independence and enhance opportunities for children to make choices for their own needs.

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