



Horsley Hill Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	15 January 2007
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Registered person	South Tyneside Council; Children & Young People
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Horsley Hill Children's Centre opened in 2006 to serve the local area. The centre comprises of a day nursery, which is open each weekday for 50 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 new purpose-built building with outdoor play areas for the children. There are currently 12 children on roll. The crèche offers a maximum of 12 places and operates as required, to support various adult groups that meet at the centre. The local authority 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 senior nursery officer and the headteacher of Seaview Primary School. There are currently four members of staff who work with the children in the day nursery and crèche. All of the staff have early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification Level 3. Additional staff can be called upon to work when the crèche is operating.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are appropriately nourished as they are provided with healthy meals and snacks. These include pasta, quorn and fresh fruit. Jugs of drinking water are available throughout the day for children to freely access. Consequently, their independence is promoted. They explore, test and develop physical control, for instance when using sit and ride toys. Quiet areas within each of the three rooms and the crèche, enable babies and children to rest and sleep as needed. This promotes their overall well-being. All relevant documentation with regard to health, including specific dietary needs and consent forms are in place and up to date. These positively safeguard children's well-being.

Staff take positive steps to ensure the premises and resources are kept clean. This ensures children can participate in all activities provided. They are learning appropriate personal hygiene practices through staff establishing suitable routines. Children are encouraged to wash their hands after using the toilet and before meals. However, the toilet flushing buttons and hand driers have been located at adult height on the bathroom walls. Consequently, children can not reach them, which has a negative impact on promoting their self-help skills. Individual paper handkerchiefs are used to protect children's well-being. Comprehensive policies, good relationships with parents and relevant training ensure individual children are cared for well should they become ill. This reduces the risk of cross infection.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are secure with effective procedures being in place for the collection of children, including the use of passwords. This ensures children are well protected. Visual risk assessment of the outdoor play area on a daily basis reduces the risk of accidental injury. Children are appropriately protected as staff use simple explanation and encouragement with regard to staying safe. An example of this is where a discussion takes place regarding the dangers of putting knives and forks near a child's eyes. As a result, children begin to understand the potential dangers and how to keep themselves safe. Steps are also taken to minimise hazards, including mopping up spilt water. Children are able to explore confidently using high quality resources, which are bought through reputable dealers. Each of the three nursery rooms and the crèche room are organised into areas, which are large enough for children to be able to move freely. This encourages their participation. Children aged over two years benefit from large low level windows, which enables them to enjoy natural light whilst playing indoors.

The majority of safety equipment is in place reducing the risk of accidents. This includes electrical socket covers, hinge protectors and smoke detectors. Regular fire evacuation drills are carried out, which promotes safe practice. However, although the manager has endeavoured to attain written evacuation procedures and plans, she has been unsuccessful. Consequently, they are not displayed in each room, which has a negative impact on informing staff and other adults of the necessary steps to take in case of a fire. The manager has a good understanding of child

protection, as well as other staff having covered this area during their initial training. This ensures children are suitably safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery and are happy to participate in the variety of activities provided. These include small world play, painting and sharing books. Staff observe children before planning activities to link to their individual interests. An appropriate balance of child-centred and adult-led experiences ensures suitable challenge for their age and stage of development. Staff encourage children to put their own coats on and serve themselves at meal times. This promotes their independence and self-help skills. Soft music, interesting lighting and different textures are provided in the baby room. This enables babies and young children to develop their senses, in a comfortable and stimulating environment.

Children's play is supported through the suitable deployment of staff. A variety of creative activities, such as drawing and exploring cornflour and water, promote children's coordination and self-expression whilst having fun. Their communication skills are fostered appropriately, resulting in interesting conversations between themselves and the staff. Children enjoy using their imagination as they play with the small wooden tree house and figures. Their mathematical thinking is developed through appropriate discussions, including comparing the size of the orange against the tangerine. A wide range of resources have been ordered to give children a breadth of experiences. However, they have not all arrived, which has a negative impact on providing a wide variety of opportunities for the children who currently attend.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

A short induction period, including visits with parents, enables children to settle into the new environment. Staff are friendly and approachable. Consequently, the nursery feels welcoming. Children show concern for each other and staff. An example of this is where a child wipes cornflour off a member of staff's trousers. Children's knowledge of the natural world is encouraged through spontaneous discussion, for instance when discussing why a pear and an apple have a stalk. The staff's appropriate approach to equal opportunities contributes to children's positive attitudes to the wider community. However, there are currently few resources to supplement this, which has a negative impact on raising children's understanding and awareness of difference. Although the staff have limited experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities, the manager has worked extensively in this area. This has a positive impact on providing an inclusive service.

Good relationships with parents are being established. The provision of a family room offers opportunities for parents to chat and have a drink in comfortable surroundings. Information is shared with parents on a daily basis, both verbally and in individual written diaries. This promotes continuity of care. Children are starting to learn right from wrong and are beginning to take responsibility for their own actions. They are encouraged not to run inside or take toys from

other children. Positive behaviour management strategies are employed, which foster appropriate behaviour and good manners.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are offered appropriate play opportunities through the suitable organisation of space, time and resources. Rooms are organised in a way that enables children to be involved in quieter or more boisterous activities. They can also choose to play independently or with others. The flexible routine ensures individual needs are met, for instance accommodating babies and children's sleep patterns. Low level storage of resources enables children to make informed choices, as they can easily view the toys and activities.

A robust recruitment procedure ensures all staff are suitably qualified and have completed relevant vetting procedures. This ensures children are appropriately safeguarded. A variety of training courses are made available for staff to promote good childcare practice, whilst encouraging their professional development. All legally required documentation is in place and implemented appropriately. This positively contributes to children's overall well-being. Children's individual records are stored securely to ensure confidentiality is maintained.

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.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- further develop the bathroom area to enable children to easily flush toilets and access hand drying facilities
- continue to develop resources, including those regarding equal opportunities
- ensure fire evacuation procedures are displayed within the childcare rooms.

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