



The Greenfield Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY244219
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Inspector	Gail Groves
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Registered person	The Greenfield Centre
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional care, Out of School 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?

The Greenfield pre-school opened in 2002 and operates from one room in The Greenfield Children's Centre which is situated in Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire. A maximum of 28 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday for two sessions from 09.00 to 11.30 and from 12.45 to 15.15 during school term times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 71 children from two years to three years on roll. Of these 35 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six staff. All of the staff, including the pre-school leader hold appropriate early years qualifications.

As well as the pre-school, the centre also provides the 'Daisy Chain' wrap around care which operates in one room of the Centre. This is open each weekday from 12.45 to 15.15 and is for a maximum of 32 children aged from two years to four years who also attend the centre's nursery school or the pre-school. In addition there is a breakfast club which is open from 08.00 to 09.00, a lunch club which is open from 11.30 to 12.45 and an after school club which is open from 15.45 to 18.00 during school term times only. In the school holidays a holiday club runs from 08.00 to 18.00 each day. A maximum of 32 children aged from two years to 11 years may attend at any one time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A range of other services and facilities are offered by the Children's Centre which help to support children and their families. Positive Beginnings offers parenting sessions, support group work and home visits with input from a Speech and Language Therapist, a Playworker, Health Visitor and Midwife. There is also a weekly Opportunity Group for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families as well as a Toy Library, a Parent and Toddler Group and a Childminder's Group. All leaders within the centre work closely with each other to provide a seamless service for children and their families from antenatal to five years of age. Adult learning also takes place and the centre provides crèche facilities for those attending. A new community learning building was added in spring 2006 and this is being used for a range of community learning courses.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from infection and are well taken care of if they have an accident or become ill because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, hygiene routines such as wiping tables and using table cloths when children are eating are consistently carried out and appropriate nappy changing procedures prevent cross-infection. Food is stored correctly and health information, such as details about routine immunisation programmes, is included in newsletters to parents. Children learn to understand simple, good health and hygiene practices. They wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating and are reminded by staff to cover their mouths when coughing. As a result, they are developing good hygiene routines for later life. All accidents are recorded and parents are asked to sign to acknowledge them. However, because a number of accidents are recorded on the same page children's confidentiality is not maintained.

Children are well nourished and enjoy a healthy diet. Healthy snacks of fruit and milk are provided at pre-school and during Daisy Chain afternoon sessions and water is readily available at all times. All the food provided at the Daisy Chain After School Club is freshly prepared on site and children are encouraged to enjoy a variety of new foods as well as more familiar ones. Children are also encouraged to develop an understanding about what is required to develop a healthy lifestyle. Discussions with the staff as they enjoy their packed lunch or their hot evening meal, as well as the wide variety of posters and information displayed around the room

encourage them to learn about healthy eating. Pre-school children learn about healthy eating through practical experiences, such as growing and eating strawberries and tomatoes in the summer. Details regarding children's dietary needs, preferences, allergies and medical needs are sought from parents and these are clearly recorded and shared with all staff. However, in the pre-school room these details are displayed on the wall and therefore confidentiality cannot be maintained.

Children take part in regular physical activity both indoors and outdoors. Outside play areas are available to all the children and are accessed freely by them every day. A wide selection of equipment such as bats, balls, scooters, bikes, balancing beams and a parachute help them to develop large muscle skills as they run, jump, pedal, throw, catch and kick with enjoyment and energy. Inside they take part in singing and movement sessions and play badminton and table tennis. As a result they are developing coordination skills and learning to enjoy exercise. Children's active play is balanced with less energetic play so that they can rest or sleep according to their needs. Pre-school children can choose to take part in physical play outside or can stay inside and enjoy quieter activities such as painting, playing on the computer or listening to stories. In the Daisy Chain room there are comfortable settees so that tired children can snuggle down under a blanket and watch television or go to sleep on camp beds in the quiet room. This enables them to recoup their energy if they are staying all day so that they do not become overtired and unable to enjoy the play and learning opportunities that are provided for them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and generally safe indoor and outdoor environment in which many of the risks to their safety have been minimised. For example, each term a health and safety audit is carried out by the school governors, staff complete a daily checklist to ensure that all areas are safe and regular fire drills are carried out and analysed to ensure that any procedural issues are identified and acted upon. However, the accessibility of dangerous items such as sharp knives and cleaning fluid in the Daisy Chain room needs to be reviewed to ensure children's safety at all times. Children use good quality, well maintained, suitable and safe equipment which meets their individual needs. All resources are stored safely and children can access them easily and independently.

Appropriate procedures ensure children are kept safe when moving around the building or when walking to or from the neighbouring school before or after attending Daisy Chain sessions. When going on major outings such as during Holiday Club, risk assessments are carried out prior to the outing taking place, parents are asked for written consent, named children are assigned to individual staff and the adult to child ratio is high. Children learn to keep themselves safe by being helped to understand simple safety rules and by discussing the dangers within their environment as they arise. For example, staff remind children to use their 'walking shoes' when they run inside, explain that they must pick up the books they have dropped in case other children slip on them and fall and explain that they should not take their shoes and socks off because they might hurt their feet if they step on the toys or drop something on them.

Children are also safeguarded because staff are well trained, clearly understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. All

staff have attended training to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and understand their responsibility to record and report any concerns they may have about children's safety and well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well and quickly become happy in the setting. As a result, they confidently make decisions and explore and investigate the environment to extend their understanding and learning. For example, they decide if they would like to eat their meal as soon as they arrive at the breakfast and lunch clubs or whether they would like to wait for a while. They explore how the strong wind blows the ribbons on the ribbon sticks and watch with interest as a fallen tree is cut up with a chain saw, discussing why it fell down and what will happen to the sawn up wood afterwards.

Children are well supported to learn good social skills because staff provide good role models of appropriate behaviour and are always careful to show their interest in what children do and say. Consequently children relate to others and are not afraid to seek out adult help and support when they need it. Their individual needs are clearly understood and new children who are unsettled are sensitively encouraged to join in with activities and to mix with others.

Within Daisy Chain care sessions staff plan an art and craft activity each day. These include making sand pictures, sponge painting, weaving, mask making, drawing, collage making, leaf printing and cotton bud painting. The rest of the session is flexible with an emphasis on children's free choice of play activity. However, some children who attend for extended care become bored and disruptive towards the end of sessions. This is in part due to the levels of tiredness experienced by the children but is also due to the lack structure offered within their play. As a result, they are not sufficiently stimulated to maintain interest and concentration and their behaviour deteriorates to the detriment of all.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and carefully plan the curriculum to promote children's progress towards the early learning goals. The medium and short term plans ensure that all the areas of learning are covered and staff focus on one particular aspect of each area at least once each term in order to provide a well balanced curriculum. Children's progress is regularly assessed and recorded by the staff and these records are used effectively to guide future planning and teaching. Written reports of children's progress are given to parents and to their new nursery when children leave the pre-school and this helps to support continuity and progression. Staff work extremely well together as a team and make effective use of time, resources and accommodation. Sessions run smoothly and staff are always aware of where they are needed within the room in order to meet children's needs and to support their play and learning. Staff help all children learn effectively and expect the most from them. They provide a wide range of play activities that engage children's interest and make good use of practical experiences, such as using story sacks to develop children's understanding and enjoyment of books. Children

with communication difficulties or who have English as an additional language are well supported by staff who use gesture and signing to develop their understanding and communication skills.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority. They learn to share and take turns as they pass the plate of fruit around at snack time and staff use a sand timer to help children understand when it is their turn to use a popular piece of equipment. They are encouraged to say 'please' and 'thank you' and to help to tidy away the toys at the end of the session. Children's independence is fostered in a variety of ways. For example, they wash and dry their hands and use the toilet with the minimum of help, learn to put their own straws into their cartons of milk and wipe up any spills they make with a tissue. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories and show good levels of concentration when they are doing so. They readily use pencils and crayons to make marks and show an interest in writing within their imaginative play. For example, they pretend to make shopping lists in the home corner and write letters in the office play area. All children join in enthusiastically with counting rhymes and songs and have daily opportunities to experiment with space and volume as they play with the sand and water. However,

opportunities for children to experience calculation and problem solving within everyday practical experiences, such as when giving out the milk cartons or pieces of fruit, are limited. As a result, children are not developing an interest in number problems.

Children are helped to learn about the world around them by exploring and investigating using a variety of senses. For example, they pat and squeeze the dough and 'gloop' to see what they feel like, they taste the strawberries and tomatoes that they have grown in the pre-school garden and they talk about the wind as they watch it moving the trees or feel it blowing fiercely on their faces. Children show a great deal of interest in using the computer and are developing good hand and eye coordination as they learn to use the mouse dexterously. They thread pasta to make necklaces and use rolling pins, cutters and garlic presses in the dough to develop this further. However, children have limited opportunities to develop some large motor skills, such as climbing and this restricts their physical development. Children enjoy taking part in a wide range of creative activities such as painting, gluing, singing, cooking and model making. They are beginning to develop their own role play scenarios as they play imaginatively in the well resourced home corner and are well supported by staff who interact sensitively in their play to stimulate and extend their role play ideas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and included at all times and as a result they feel a strong sense of belonging. For example, before children start to attend the pre-school they receive a home visit from a member of staff so that their individual needs can be assessed and discussed with their parents. This enables staff to help them to settle quickly and easily. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given good support and are fully included in all activities. Staff liaise closely with their parents and other professionals when deciding how best to meet their care and learning needs and draw up individual education plans which they review regularly.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They learn to respond well to appropriate expectations for their behaviour because staff provide good role models, set clear and consistent boundaries and use a variety of techniques to help them behave more positively. Staff praise children's good behaviour and give clear explanations as to why some behaviour is inappropriate. For example, children are asked not to climb on furniture or to throw things because it is dangerous and a child who bites another child is asked to consider that they might have upset and hurt them. Consequently, they are developing a growing awareness of right and wrong.

Children's efforts and achievements are recognised and valued. For example, staff praise children for eating their lunch well or for building a complex construction with bricks. As a result, they develop self-esteem and confidence. They are offered personal independence to make choices and take decisions throughout their daily routines. For example, they can decide if they would like to play inside or outside and can choose which fruit they wish to eat at snack time. Children benefit from resources, such as displays, books, dolls and jigsaws which help them to value diversity and recognise the positive differences between people.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff seek and value parents' observations of what their children can do and use these as the starting point for children's development when they first begin to attend the pre-school. Parents are provided with good quality information about the setting and its provision including clear and detailed information about the Foundation Stage of learning as well as the 'Birth to three matters' framework for younger children. Regular newsletters keep them fully informed about what is being offered by the centre and highlights any courses, such as one on 'Learning Through Play', which may help them to support their children. Parents discuss children's progress or share concerns through informal discussions with staff at the beginning and end of sessions. At the end of term they are invited to look at their child's 'Special Book' which contains samples of their work, observational comments and photographs. Parents of children who are about to leave and move on to nursery are also given a detailed written leavers' report. However, the lack of opportunities for regular, more formal consultations to look at and talk about their child's learning records means that they are not helped to see the connections between the play activities provided by the pre-school and the progress that their child is making. As a result, they are not being fully supported to continue children's play and learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff have a high regard for the well-being of all children, a clear sense of purpose and a commitment to continual improvement. For example, all staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications and regularly attend training to update and develop their skills both in areas that interest them as well as in areas which will benefit the setting. As a result, children's care and learning is enhanced. In addition, both the pre-school and the Daisy Chain extended care services have gained accreditation with the Herts Quality Standards quality assurance scheme in order to ensure that they achieve and continue to maintain a high standard of provision.

All of the necessary documentation to ensure the safe and efficient management of the provision is in place and the setting's policies and procedures work well in practice to promote children's

health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Record keeping systems are used well to meet children's needs.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good and significantly contributes to children's progress towards the early learning goals. The centre's manager has a clear vision for the setting with a strong focus on the personal development and achievement of all children. The pre-school assesses its own strengths and weaknesses well and additional feedback from parents is sought via regular questionnaires and through a comments box in the entrance hall. Good monitoring and evaluation systems of the nursery education are in place. These ensure that all areas of learning are covered by the curriculum and that the focus of learning identified within each area helps children to make progress through the stepping stones. The manager is also in the process of developing and implementing performance management and staff appraisal systems. This will enable more detailed monitoring and evaluation of the provision to be carried out.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

After the last care inspection, the setting agreed to improve its documentation. They were asked to ensure that there were written procedures for dealing with uncollected children and complaints and that records of medication administered to children as well as a daily record of children's attendance were kept. They were also asked to keep records about children's special dietary requirements and medical needs and to ensure that staff were made aware of them. All this documentation is now in place. Practices in respect of hand washing were also identified as needing review and paper towels are now provided to prevent cross infection. As a result of all these improvements children's health, safety and well-being is now more fully monitored and protected.

The setting also agreed to improve children's safety by ensuring that potential hazards, such as sharp knives, cleaning fluids, electrical sockets and trailing wires were made inaccessible. Sockets are now covered and wires are hidden but knives and cleaning materials remain accessible and therefore children's safety is still compromised. Also, the setting agreed to ensure the confidentiality of children's accident records and of details regarding their medical conditions. However, this has not been effectively addressed and therefore remains an issue.

Following the last nursery education inspection, the setting agreed to improve the assessments of children's progress and the monitoring and evaluation of their educational provision in order to ensure that they could plan and provide a balanced curriculum. They now write detailed assessments of children's attainments and progress which are based on their observations and write a weekly evaluation of the activities they provide under each area of learning. These records then form the basis for future planning. Planning systems also highlight the focus of learning within each area of the curriculum in order to monitor that all aspects are covered and that children have appropriate learning opportunities. As a result, children's progress and achievements now can be assessed in greater detail in order to identify and plan the next stage in their learning.

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 accident records and details regarding children's medical and dietary needs remain confidential
- ensure dangerous items such as cleaning fluids and sharp knives are made inaccessible to children in the Daisy Chain room
- review the planning and organisation of the Daisy Chain extended care sessions to ensure that children remain fully engaged and stimulated throughout.

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):

- increase the opportunities for children to develop calculation skills during everyday practical activities
- increase the opportunities to develop large scale physical skills such as climbing
- review the systems used to share information with parents about children's progress and attainments so that they can become more fully involved with their children'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