



Sticky Mits Childcare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY336961
Inspection date	23 January 2007
Inspector	Lynn Rodgers
Setting Address	1-2 Queensgate, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN1 3JN
Telephone number	01302 768 002
E-mail	office@stickymits.com
Registered person	LHD Partners Ltd
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sticky Mits Childcare Centre opened in 2006 and is run by LHD Partners Ltd. It operates from several rooms on the first floor of a large building situated within the Waterdale Centre, Doncaster and serves the local community. There is an annex where out of school care is offered. The childcare centre is open Monday to Saturday from 07.00 to 18.30 all year round. A maximum of 114 children may attend at any one time, 74 of which may be under 5 years.

There are currently 30 children aged from three months to under 5 years on roll. Of these, seven,

three year olds receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and also supports children who speak English as an additional

language. The nursery employs five staff. All of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Daily routines for snacks and lunch provide all the children with the opportunity to sit together. They are involved with the preparation of some foods, fully supported by adults, which means their interaction and independence is encouraged and fostered in a very positive way. For example, helping themselves to drinks and spreading butter on crumpets and cutting up fruit. Adults take into account the individual and cultural needs of all children. Older children are able to talk about what they like or dislike and what foods are good for them. Good adult support ensures children's individual needs are met.

Children thrive because staff follow very effective procedures and practices which meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. Good adult support and guidance helps children gain a positive understanding of hygiene and a real desire to become independent in their personal care. For example, brushing teeth after eating. Staff follow the local environmental health guidance for the preparation of foods and ensure all work surfaces are kept clean and free from clutter. All staff are first aid trained and have an appropriate method for recording accidents, however, not all accidents are entered into the correct documentation.

Adults provide children with opportunities to explore, test and develop physical control. Staff have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support a strong and healthy child. Their understanding of each child's stage of development means the youngest children are confident to try out new skills, ask for help when needed and set their own limits within the safe environment. Older children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise through both fine and gross motor skills. They delight in the challenges of a versatile range of activities, such as climbing, running, jumping and manoeuvring vehicles, which they tackle enthusiastically.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure welcoming environment by adults who fully understand their role in promoting children's safety. Adults encourage children to tidy away discarded toys and be aware of their environment. Risk of accidental injury to children is minimised because staff are extremely vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. The setting is very well designed and organised and has good safety and security precautions, such as key pads on all doors and a visitors' signing in and out book. Practitioners help keep children safe within the setting and on outings because they understand and comply with health and safety requirements and by maintaining adult-child ratios.

Indoor space is used effectively so children have room to move around and be comfortable. Children use a variety of good quality toys and play materials appropriate to their age and stage

of development. They can reach toys and resources easily, as they are organised in low level storage. All children enjoy many shared experiences because there is sufficient child height furniture to enable them to sit together comfortably, such as when accessing the computer and meal times.

Children's well-being is safeguarded due to staff having secure knowledge of local safeguarding children procedures. All staff have attended child protection training and the child protection liaison officer ensures all staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities. However, the incident book is not up-to-date. Staff have a good understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits and how to involve children effectively in organising their environment. This allows children to learn some sense of danger and knowledge about how to protect themselves from harm and they are given constant reassurance and guidance by staff. Regular fire practice ensures children know what to do in an emergency, thereby, creating a calm and effective evacuation of the building.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have some understanding of the Foundation Stage and stepping stones. They effectively use their time and resources to support children's learning and use the correct vocabulary to extend children's language. One staff member is bi-lingual and speaks some Portuguese to help one of the children who has English as an additional language. They question the children appropriately to find out what the children know and what they can do. Children become confident communicators as they share ideas in their play, for instance, using circle time to listen to stories and improve their communication skills in singing and musical activities. Staff plan interesting activities which effectively link to the six areas of learning and interact and support children in a way that positively affects their learning. Staff observe and assess aspects of children's development and learning regularly and frequently. They draw on these detailed assessments in planning what children need to learn next.

Children are beginning to understand about shape and colour. They use appropriate language and choose simple sentences and words to illustrate their work and communicate with each other, as they complete their pictures and during discussions. Mathematical activities are used to encourage children's number skills. Staff refer to the stepping stones guidance to plan and provide a well balanced range of activities and experiences. This ensures natural progression and improves the quality of care and education provided. Planned activities take into account children's ages and stages of development and staff organise resources effectively to promote independence and social skills. Children respond well to the adults' calm, quiet approach and their clear explanations and support. However, there is limited large construction to aid children's awareness of building larger models and extending their imagination. There are missed opportunities to extend children's awareness of basic calculation, such as during counting games and setting out tableware.

A good balance of adult-led, child-initiated activities maintains children's interest throughout the session. For example, three year-olds look at shape and colour, to be able to name and recognise the shapes and colours they are given. All children use marks readily to represent

their ideas and older children are beginning to form familiar letters. For example during discussions, some children could say what their names begin with and some familiar words.

The younger children are confident in the setting and in their relationships with each other and staff. They play happily, learning to take turns and respond to others as they use puzzles, games and books. Babies respond to adults and enjoy a close relationship with each other and the older children. They enjoy cuddles and physical contact which enables them to feel secure and play contentedly. The quality of younger children's learning experiences is being fostered as staff plan appropriate activities, based on the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff recognise young children's competence and appreciate their efforts when they show their understanding of new experiences and words. Each child has a daily diary where staff record details of goals achieved. Staff plan activities according to the children's ages and stages of development and organise resources effectively to promote independence and social skills. Children respond well to the adults' calm, quiet approach and they give clear explanations and support when appropriate. Children's needs and their welfare is well met through staff getting to know children well and recording what they can do, which means the next stage of their development is clearly met.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Adults manage children's behaviour in a very positive way and have the ability to deal with a wide range of children's behaviour. Children behave well because they know what is expected of them. Staff provide clear explanations and support children in managing their behaviour by planning activities where they learn to co-operate and take turns. For example, children wait patiently for turns with toys and negotiate roles in the home corner. They learn effectively about their own community and are introduced to the wider world in daily activities, planned topics and visits around the local area. Other festivals are celebrated and the provision has a good selection of resources reflecting diversity. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff keep parents very well informed about what their children are doing and learning, through good quality information and daily communication, such as regular newsletters, photographs and informal discussions. They are fully informed of the procedure to follow should they wish to make a complaint. Parents regularly see and comment on their child's assessments records and meet with staff to discuss their progress and achievements. This encourages parents to become involved in their child's learning in meaningful ways, such as helping in the nursery to establish a sense of belonging and helping their child to settle into the daily routines. The setting encourages parents to talk about what their child does at home, which helps staff to plan their next stage of development.

Children show a strong sense of belonging and feel at ease in the setting as they are warmly welcomed by friendly, familiar staff. Children feel good about themselves because staff know them well and show they are interested in what they do and say by talking and listening to them. They value children's attempts and achievements with appropriate use of praise and encouragement. For example, staff clap and smile as children achieve their goals. Children with learning difficulties are well supported because staff work co-operatively with parents and

other agencies to plan for their individual needs. There is a bi-lingual staff member on hand to support a Portuguese child and help his integration into the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management of the educational provision is good. Clear aims and assessments for children's care and education are shared with staff and parents and work well in practice. Staff have continued access to relevant training to enhance their professional development and work co-operatively with other professionals, such as the local partnership outreach teacher and support workers to improve the outcomes for children. They know their roles and responsibilities and what is expected from them. Space is organised effectively to meet children's individual needs and adult, child ratios are maintained. Planning of activities is a team effort with lots of good input from all staff. There is a strong focus on the personal development and achievement of all children through clear goals and guidance. Staff ensure children are motivated to learn by providing suitable experiences and activities and have a positive approach to developing children's independence. Adults working with the children evaluate and monitor the curriculum to identify any areas for improvement to provide quality care and education for all children.

The effective deployment of staff increases children's feelings of security and well-being. This ensures children are cared for by a key person who builds trusting relationships with the children and their families. There are always sufficient staff who know the children well and who can reassure and care for them. The grouping of children, according to their age and stage of development, enables staff to provide age-appropriate activities and experiences that children enjoy.

Partnership with parents is fostered very positively. All relevant information is constantly shared and they are fully informed of what their children do. A comprehensive collection of policies and procedures, which contributes to children's health and safety, is in place and is regularly reviewed. Children benefit from staff who fully understand their roles and responsibilities through good induction training and regular appraisal. Children's safety is positively addressed and staff are vigilant and ensure children are safe and well protected. Children with specific learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language are welcomed into the setting and staff monitor their progress to ensure their individual needs are met. 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.

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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 accidents are recorded appropriately
- ensure the incident book is kept up-to-date.

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):

- provide suitable large construction materials
- further develop children's awareness of basic maths calculation and number recognition in everyday activities.

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