



St Andrew's Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY336015
Inspection date	05 February 2007
Inspector	Christine Fraser Turner
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Registered person	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 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?

St Andrew's Children Centre was registered in October 2006. It is run by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council's children's services division. The day care and crèche provision operate from four main rooms within the centre which is designated for their use. The crèche has not yet been in operation. The setting opens from 08.00 until 18.00 each weekday. It is closed for bank holidays and public holidays, five training days and two additional days. A maximum of 86 children may be cared for at any one time, which includes children receiving full day care or crèche provision. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 46 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these, 20 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The centre employs a children's centre manager who is separate from the day care manager. The children's centre employs 17 staff including the manager and a teacher. There are 13 staff, including the manager and teacher who hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is one member of staff working towards a level two child care qualification.

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 practitioners follow current and appropriate health and hygiene guidelines and policies. Not all children have written parental consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. Children follow simple, good hygiene routines, for example, washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They begin to learn why they wash their hands as staff inform them they wash their hands to get rid of germs.

Children are well nourished. They benefit from the setting's healthy snack policy which incorporates dental health by providing healthy options for children, such as, fruit. Children are able to make healthy choices at snack time as they watch staff cut the fruit up. They comment on what the fruit looks like as they look at the colour of the melon and say 'it's the same as a banana'. They make choices at meal times as staff ask children what they would like to eat or they select their own cereal at breakfast time and choose a drink. Drinks are readily available to children throughout the day to quench their thirst because staff provide a jug of water and cups on a tray at child height in the rooms.

Children rest and sleep according to their individual needs. Staff discuss children's individual sleep routine with parents and staff follow their advice by providing appropriate comforts, for example, a special toy or blanket. Comfortable areas are available in all rooms where children can relax on comfortable cushions or settees.

Children enjoy physical activity both in and out of doors. Children under two learn to climb stairs or cope with sloping ground because staff have purchased equipment to help them practise their skills. They have good access to sit and ride toys indoors and toys that rock. Outdoor play is available on a daily basis and the setting has made provision for suitable clothing for children so children can play out in most weathers. Children ride bikes and scooters and learn to co-operate as some items of equipment are for shared use. They are learning to catch and throw in large or small groups and in pairs with bean bags.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure, safe indoor and outdoor environment. The premises are single storey with good access and toilet facilities for adults and children with disabilities. Electronic security doors ensure that children have sole use of the designated child care areas. There are three rooms for children, one for children under two, one for children aged two and a pre-school room. Children benefit from well planned play rooms where they

have easy access to a very good range of age appropriate toys and equipment. For example, low chairs, with secure harnesses, enable babies to sit at the table with other children and staff at meal times. A designated space where they can rest quietly is readily available in two of the rooms where children can rest or sit quietly. Babies use good quality cots in a separate sleep area within their room. A separate crèche room is available and has equally good quality toys and equipment but has not yet been used as a crèche.

Children keep themselves safe as they learn to take care of the resources and each other. They know not to eat play dough and help to keep their room tidy by putting resources back where they belong. Children are kept safe when sleeping because staff follow clear guidelines, for example, not to use cot bumpers and quilts with babies.

Children are safeguarded because staff have a good understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put procedures into practice when necessary. Clear policies and procedures are in place to support staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and want to come to nursery. They choose toys independently through well planned play areas. Staff assist younger children to make their choice by placing resources within their reach. The daily routines ensure that all children, whichever session they attend, experience a wide range of experiences, including a story time and singing time. Children build positive relationships with staff and each other, for example, as they socialise at snack and meal times. Children gain new skills as they learn to eat independently using age appropriate utensils. They use social conventions, such as, saying please and thank you. Children under three benefit from staff using the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan positive experiences. However, although staff observe and record children's achievements they do not yet use this information to plan for children's individual next steps for children's play, learning and development. Children enjoy a good range of sensory experiences, including finger painting, sand and water. They develop language as they join in with songs daily and listen to stories. Staff use good resources to maintain children's interest, such as, story sacks. Children receive praise for their achievements.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Carefully chosen resources ensure that children benefit from a very well planned learning environment. A clear programme of activities is in place to help children settle into their new environment and covers all areas of learning successfully. Through plans and discussion staff show how they continue to keep children interested and keen to learn, for example, changing the magnets for the musical instruments. Children are likely to make good progress in relation to the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. The children have only been attending the setting for a short time but effective planning has ensured that children are confident to move in their own environment and know their way around the children's centre to help them feel secure.

Systems are in place for staff to gather useful information from parents based on children's interests. Staff record what children can do through a variety of methods, such as, observation, photographs, samples of children's work and the child's journal, completed when children attended another setting. However, this information is not yet used to plan the next steps for children's play, learning and development.

Children are confident and able to make their own choices for play. They concentrate well on self chosen activities and are learning to work alongside each other and share resources with each other. For example, children talking together about sharing the dough as they play together. They listen well at story time. Children make marks using readily available resources, such as clip boards and pencils. They are beginning to recognise their names at self-registration and name cards are available throughout the session to support children who want to write their own name.

Children are learning to count through daily routine as they help count the number of children in a group. Staff model mathematical language with children as they compare the size of the building made with blocks against the size of a doll. Children show a good interest in shapes as they complete puzzles.

Children are motivated and interested in technology and are confident to use a computer and mouse confidently to complete a programme. They talk about past events, for example, a trip to Blackpool. Children investigate construction materials as they build using three dimensional shapes from recycled materials and use tools appropriately, for example, the glue spreader with the glue.

Children begin to differentiate colours as they choose the feather they want to stick on their model. They explore a wide range of textures as they use dough, sand and grit. They use their imagination well in role play as children play doctors and use the available props to support their game. They move their body in time to the music at circle time and join in enthusiastically with familiar songs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by staff who work effectively with parents to meet children's individual needs and ensure that they are fully included in the life of the setting. All children benefit from good settling in procedures. Well planned, continuous provision enables children to make their own choices for play. Children learn about other people's cultures as well as their own, for example, through interesting displays where children enjoy experimenting with the African musical instruments or looking at the globe. They benefit from a good range of resources that promote positive images.

Children behave well and are praised for wanted behaviour. Staff implement the setting's behaviour policy consistently and any minor disagreements are handled sensitively with the minimum of fuss. A good range of books are available to help children to learn about the importance of not telling lies, saying please and thank-you and not being a bully. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents share information with staff about their child before the child starts so staff can provide appropriate care, for example, their child's sleep routines and special comforters. They share what their child likes to do and staff use this information to help children settle. Staff and parents share information on a daily basis on what children have done in nursery, such as talk about a story a child has enjoyed. However, parents of children receiving funding for education do not yet receive information on the Foundation Stage curriculum or receive information how they can continue their child's learning at home. Staff are aware and have included this in their action plan. Discussion with parents during the inspection showed that they are happy with the care their child receives. Although they are aware of their child's development record and had a brief look at it they are not clear on their child's progress. They state more support from staff would make it clearer to them. Although there is a complaints procedure in place not all parents know how to make a complaint. Staff are helpful when helping new children to settle and are approachable.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from good recruitment and vetting procedures that contribute to children being protected and cared for by suitable staff. Adults have a strong commitment to ongoing improvement through training and a list of planned training for the next two months is readily available and includes, first aid training, food hygiene, 'Birth to three matters' framework, child protection and fire safety.

The adult to child ratio positively supports children's care and learning and play. The organisation of lunch time is well planned, staff are clear about their responsibilities and get on with their role without disturbing children's activities, such as story time. Good use of space ensures that children are cared for in age appropriate groups which includes some planned time when children come together, for example, at breakfast time.

Good policies and procedures are in place and organised into outcomes for children to support the smooth running of the setting. Staff are clear on the setting's policies and procedures through an effective induction programme with all new staff. Records on individual children are readily available for inspection and parents are able to access their child's file at any time.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Although the centre has only opened recently it benefits from an experienced management team. Staff have a clear vision for the nursery education with a strong focus on personal development and achievement for children. They are able to identify their own strengths and areas for improvement and a clear action plan has been drawn up to ensure all identified improvements are completed by June 2007. Staff work well as a team and have time to plan for children's play together. The management team are good role models for staff and use staff appraisals as a means to develop individual members of the team.

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 written parental consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is in place for all children
- use observations of children to plan the next steps for children's play, learning and development (also applies to nursery education)

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):

- ensure that parents are kept well informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum; what their child is learning and how they can continue relevant learning and play activities at home.

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