

Explore Learning Limited

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY338802
Inspection date	11 April 2007
Inspector	Lindsay Ann Farenden
Setting Address	J Sainsbury Plc, 566 London Road, Sutton, Surrey, SM3 9AA
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Registered person	Explore Learning Ltd
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of 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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Explore Learning is one of a number of learning centres run by Explore Learning Ltd. It operates from a purpose built room within a large supermarket. It is located in North Cheam, Surrey. A maximum of 30 children may attend the centre at any one time. Children from the age of five years to 16 years of age attend the centre. The centre is open from 15.00 to 20.00 during term time and 10.00 to 18.00 on Saturdays and School holidays. It is also open on Sundays from 10.00 to 16.00 all year round.

There are currently 63 children on roll. The centre supports children with learning difficulties/and or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The centre employs three full time staff and 10 part time staff. The three full time staff hold appropriate qualifications in relation to the setting and are working towards a level 3 child care qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children confidently help themselves to drinking water from a water dispenser, which is accessible to them in the room at all times. This encourages children to think about their personal needs and prevents them getting dehydrated.

Children are cared for in a very clean, warm and welcoming environment. Children's health is protected because the three full time staff all hold a first aid certificate and the first aid box is well stocked. Parents have provided appropriate consent in relation to emergency treatment. This means children are safeguarded in the event of an accident. Children who are ill do not attend the centre, thus preventing the spread of infectious ailments.

Children's toileting needs are met, by either using the supermarket toilets under the supervision of staff or the toilet off the room used in the centre. However, soap is not always available for children to wash their hands with.

Children's fine motor skills are encouraged very well, through using the computer keyboard and mouse and accessing writing materials.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from very a well organised, spacious, bright and airy environment. The centre provides a good range of up to date computers and work stations, which means that each individual child always has a computer available to work at. Adjustable chairs and foot stool are in place, so that children's comfort is taken into account when they are using the computers.

Security arrangements ensure children's safety. For example, the gate to the centre is kept locked, when not in use and procedures are in place for the safe collection of children. The computer equipment is checked regularly and all wires are tucked into troughs. Systems are in place to prevent children accessing anything inappropriate on the computers.

Written risk assessments are relevant to the setting and demonstrate that risks are identified and effective action is taken to minimise these. Children are helped to learn to keep themselves safe, as staff explain to them when they first start the fire evacuation procedures and how to use the computer equipment properly. Children and staff practise the emergency evacuation procedures on a regular basis. This helps children to learn to leave the premises quickly and safely.

The children are well protected because staff attend child protection training. They are aware of reporting any child protection issues to senior staff. The local authority child protection procedures are not in place, however, contact numbers to report any concerns to social services are easily accessible. This ensures children's welfare is well safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff greet children as they arrive at the centre with lots of positive comments and have discussions with them. This helps children to feel very welcome and gives them a sense of belonging. Children are very happy and clearly enjoy their time at the centre. They eagerly make their way to the computers, know their passwords and log on.

Children concentrate extremely hard on the learning curriculum programmes. They really enjoy exploring the programme lessons in maths, reading, writing and spelling. Staff spend time with parents to find out about their child's abilities and use continual assessment systems to monitor children's progress. This ensures each individual child accesses appropriate programmes to ensure their learning is continually challenged.

Staff are very attentive to the children, immediately responding to children who ask for help and noticing when children are having difficulties with a particular concept. They then spend time with the child, helping them to work out the answer. Children are eager to tell staff their score at the end of each programme lesson and are thrilled to obtain a lizard card for a score of more than 70%, which they can save up and trade for a prize. Children put their scores on an ace challenge board, so they can see their own progress, which includes scores for asking questions, concentration and efforts. This builds up children's confidence, helps them develop a positive attitude to learning and makes learning fun for children of differing abilities.

Children like playing freely in the 'surf club' area for 15 minutes at the end of each session with the support of staff. They enjoy playing board games, colouring and learning computer games. Topics each month, such as the world and health, extend children's learning in a relaxed manner.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children behave very well. They enjoy the stimulating sessions at the centre, which enables them to be occupied at all times. This helps prevent children developing any challenging behaviours. Staff provide good role models, as they talk to children in a kind and patient manner and offer them lots of praise for efforts and achievements. The reward systems of lizard cards and applause given to children when they complete a challenge, make them feel good about themselves and promotes their self-esteem.

All children are welcomed into the Explore learning centre and benefit fully as staff value each child and respect their individuality. Children who have English as an additional language are provided with a programme to support their learning. Children explore the wider world and other cultures through various computer programmes and activities about flags of different countries and looking at the world map and places the children have been to. However, there are few resources and books depicting positive images of diversity for children.

Children with learning difficulties/and or disabilities are very welcome and the computer programmes are adjusted to support their learning, for example, to help them with life skills, such as managing money and telling the time.

The staff are warm and friendly towards the parents and make time to go through their child's written progress chart of the computer programme lessons their child has done and scores they received at the end of each session. Parents are also regularly invited to meetings with the

centre manager to discuss their child's progress report on maths and communication, language and literacy and how the child's next stage of learning can be met. This strengthens the home and Explore learning centre's partnership, which benefits the children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The centre is very well organised and provides a happy learning environment for children. The staff are employed effectively and benefit from the strong leadership and clear focus of the manager of the centre. This contributes to the smooth running of the centre and the constant support children receive. Staff ratios are high and strategies are in place to make sure they are consistently maintained.

The policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare of the children. All the required documentation is in place, although the daily written attendance record does not always include children's surnames.

Staff undergo rigorous checking systems to ensure they are suitable to work with children. There is a good induction system to ensure they are aware of routines of the day and each session. Staff attend in house training to develop their knowledge and skills. The three full time staff members have degrees and are experts in their subjects and are all working towards a child care level 3 qualification to meet the requirements of the National Standards.

Overall the setting meets the needs of the range of 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 good. 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):

- ensure a list of children's first names and surnames who are present at any one time are easily accessible and obtain the local authorities guidelines for safeguarding children
- provide children with a range of resources which depict positive images of diversity

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