

Benton Hall Creche

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY335858
Inspection date	07 August 2007
Inspector	Patricia Mary Champion

Setting Address	Benton Hall, Wickham Hill, WITHAM, Essex, CM8 3LH
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Telephone number	01376 502 454
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Registered person	The Club Company
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Type of inspection	Childcare
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Type of care	Crèche
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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?

Benton Hall Crèche was registered in 2006 and is one of eight crèches run by The Club Company plc. It operates from a purpose built playroom within the main golf and leisure centre building situated on the outskirts of Witham. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 26 children may attend the crèche at any one time. The facility opens seven days a week from 08.00 until 18.00 for 52 weeks of the year. The crèche currently opens from 09:00 until 14:30 from Monday to Friday and 09:00 until 13:30 on Saturday and Sunday. Children attend from the local and wider community. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The setting employs seven staff, of whom five of the staff, including the manager holds an appropriate early years qualification. There is one member of staff who is currently working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because they play in a very clean environment and staff follow good health and hygiene procedures. Staff have well established routines to prevent cross-infection such as cleaning tables and nappy changing mats with anti-bacterial cleanser and by wearing disposable gloves. There is a sick child policy to enable staff to protect children from illness and infection and information about common childhood illness and exclusion periods are kept on file. Children's welfare is promoted as appropriate accident records are kept and parents sign to acknowledge the entry. Staff have attended first aid training and the first aid kit is easily accessible. Children learn about basic hygiene routines as staff encourage them to wash their hands after using the toilet. Liquid soap and paper towels are provided and children learn about the need to dispose of used tissues hygienically in the bin.

Children eat a healthy diet provided by parents. Care is taken to ensure that staff are fully informed of any allergies or special dietary needs. Babies' individual feeding patterns are known and respected. Parents provide drinks in individual cups and bottles, which are easily accessible and stored within the children's eyesight. There is a fridge where staff can store perishable food items supplied by parents.

Children have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise, which contributes to their good health. They thoroughly enjoy using the outdoor area, which has a safe all-weather play surface. Outdoor toys such as climbing apparatus, sit and ride cars, balls, skittles and hoops encourage the children to practise their physical skills. Staff are mindful to protect children in hot weather. They encourage children to wear sunhats when playing outdoors and ask parents to apply sun screen. Air conditioning keeps the playroom cool and shaded areas outdoors allow children to play in comfort.

Children sleep in comfort according to their own needs or parents' wishes. The staff recognise the signs of tiredness in babies and children, they act on this knowledge to offer and support appropriate periods of rest and activity. There is a cot available or alternatively parents request that the children sleep in their own buggies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are effectively kept safe because risks of accidental injury are minimised. The playroom used by the children is specifically designed for the purpose and safety features such as finger guards to the internal doors have been fitted. Risk assessment and daily checks are recorded and the staff are extremely vigilant about the security of the children. Very secure entry systems are in place and numbered wrist bands and a password system ensures that children are only released to parents or other authorised adults. All visitors to the premises are carefully monitored and identity documents are checked when they are asked to sign in. There are clear fire safety procedures and the children learn about their personal safety when they practise the emergency evacuation drill.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment creatively decorated with murals of animals. A broad range of good quality toys and play materials are stored where children can freely access them and make choices about their play. Additional play equipment is stored in the

spacious cupboards and this is regularly rotated to provide added interest and stimulation. All toys and furnishings are checked frequently for damage and cleanliness. Any play items within reach of babies are safe for them to explore using their mouth and hands.

Children are safeguarded because staff are fully aware of their child protection responsibilities. Staff attend child protection training and have the child protection handbook from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Therefore, they are aware of current information regarding child protection which ensures they act in the best interests of children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident to make their own choices about the activities and the games they play. A range of fun experiences are provided for children of all ages. Adults play with children at their level which encourages them to talk and express themselves imaginatively. Interaction between the staff and children is very good. Children have great fun making lunch in the play kitchen or dressing up with the range of themed costumes and props. Small world zoo animals are provided and children use their imagination to turn this activity into an animal wildlife park. Children are curious about the animals and sea life creatures displayed in the playroom and ask questions. Creative opportunities are provided each day and children carefully draw or colour in pictures. Staff encourage children to recognise and name colours and they snuggle up to read books together. Although the outdoor area provides good opportunities to encourage the older children's physical development, stimulating outdoor experiences that promote children's imagination or creativity are not currently organised.

Babies and young children are warmly welcomed and settled by the friendly staff team who respond sensitively to their facial expressions and body language. Babies play with brightly coloured interactive toys and show great excitement when they hear music play. Staff have knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and they ensure that most activities are adapted for the developing needs of the children that attend. There is plenty of equipment that helps develop the older children's physical skills. However, babies do not have access to play equipment that encourages their developing mobility. For example, there are few safe items that allow them to pull themselves to a standing position.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children gain confidence and play happily together. They behave well due to the consistent, positive strategies that staff employ to help them understand right from wrong. Staff speak sensitively and use respectful language with children and present as calm role models. As a result the children learn about politeness and how to contribute to a group, take turns and share. Praise and encouragement are offered to acknowledge children's good attempts and accomplishments. Children mix and make new friends and the older children show great care and tenderness towards the younger children.

Children's individual needs are met. They are encouraged to bring things from home to carry or play with because staff recognise and understand that this may help young children move between home and a new setting. Information is gathered and ongoing dialogue with parents ensures that staff get to know the children and babies well. Suitable arrangements are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is an equal opportunities

policy and play resources and books with positive images encourage children to develop a positive attitude towards others.

Children benefit from the friendly partnership with parents and carers. Parents are made to feel very welcome. Staff maintain regular, informal communication with parents which develops strong partnerships between all those involved in keeping children healthy and safe. Written information is displayed and parents are invited to feedback their thoughts and suggestions. Parents make complementary comments about the care provided and appreciate the efforts of the staff team.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children settle well into the crèche due to the caring and sensitive staff team. There are now very effective staffing levels and robust recruitment procedures are in place. The staff team meets the requirements regarding qualifications and all staff have been vetted and cleared through the Criminal Records Bureau. However, evidence of these checks are not currently held on site. The organisation of the playroom allows children and babies to feel welcome. As they become toddlers the room layout encourages them to explore their environment. There is a separate area for babies who are not yet walking.

Documentation is organised appropriately to support the children's welfare and safety. The registration certificate is displayed for parents to view. Records are stored confidentially and any parental wishes are respected. Policies and procedures are in place and understood by staff.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection six actions were raised. The provider was required to: ensure staffing ratios are met at all times; ensure staff are able to consistently support children's emotional well-being; ensure that food and drink is stored according to regulations relating to food safety and hygiene; ensure an effective system is in place for the exchange of information between parents and staff members to meet the needs of the babies and children, both individually and as a group; ensure the play space for babies meets minimum space requirements to enable free movement and provide sufficient equipment to enable babies to be fed according to their age or stage of development.

Since the last inspection additional staff have been employed and this measure has considerably improved outcomes for children. The required staffing ratios are now met at all times and staff are deployed effectively to meet the children's needs. Staff now have more time to talk to parents to exchange information and food and drink is now stored appropriately. Babies have been given additional play space and additional high chairs have been purchased and are available to the children attending the crèche. Consequently, children's welfare and safety has been enhanced.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action to meet the National Standards. On 14 February 2007 Ofsted received a complaint which raised concerns under National Standard 1: Suitable Person, National Standard 11:

Behaviour and National Standard 13: Child Protection. The concerns were initially referred to another agency, who confirmed that they were agreeable for Ofsted to look into this matter. Ofsted made two unannounced visits to the setting on 15 February 2007 and 7 March 2007. During these visits, the Inspector interviewed staff; reviewed policies and procedures and made observations of the setting and the staff working there. As a result of the first visit, an action was set under National Standard 13: Child Protection. A suitable response was received from the setting and all the information received and evidence gathered has been reviewed by an Inspection Team Manager. Ofsted can confirm that the Registered Person remains qualified for registration.

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):

- provide more play equipment that encourages babies' developing mobility and continue to develop the outdoor area so that it provides stimulating opportunities relating to all areas of play
- ensure that evidence is kept on the premises regarding the staff's clearance and vetting checks.

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