

# The Caterpillar Club

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	311821
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 April 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Judith Ann Hodgson

<b>Setting Address</b>	Birtley Community Association, Birtley Community Centre, Ravensworth Road, Birtley, Chester le Street, County Durham, DH3 1EN
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Caterpillar Club Out of School Care
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
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<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care, Out of School 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](http://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 satisfactory. 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?

The Caterpillar Club and Bumble Bees Pre-School are located in Birtley Community Centre in the Birtley area of Gateshead. The Bumble Bees offer pre-school care for children aged from two and a half to five years. The Caterpillar Club offers before and after school care for children aged from four to eight years, however, they may admit children older than this. The group admits children from Birtley East Junior School, Ravensworth, St Joseph's Infant and Junior School, Portabello and Barley Mow.

The Bumble Bees Pre-School is open from 09:15-11:45, Monday to Friday in school term-time. The Caterpillar Club is open from 08:00-09:00 and from 15:00-18:00 in term-time, and from 08:00-18:00 in school holidays. Both groups are closed on Bank Holidays.

Both groups have use of the same areas, which are the hall, a large adjoining room, and toilets to the back of the premises. There is a small sectioned-off kitchen area in the room. There is outdoor play space to the side of the premises, however, this is also a car parking area and can only be used when safe to do so. There is a local park that is very close to the group that can

be used for outdoor play and the Caterpillar Club has an agreement with a nearby junior school for occasional use of their playground.

There are three staff members working with the pre-school children, one of whom is the person in charge and one regular volunteer. There are four members of staff working with the Out of School children and three used for escorts to collect children from various schools. All staff members have appropriate childcare qualifications. There are 24 children on roll in the pre-school group, 23 of these are funded children. There are 72 children on roll in the Out of School group who attend on a part-time basis.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

The staff help the children to stay free from infection as they encourage younger children to wash their hands after using the bathroom and before snack. Paper tissues are freely available for them to wipe their noses and the staff remind the children to cover their mouth when coughing. However, hand washing routines for older children are not as effective and could cause cross infection as they are not encouraged to wash their hands before snack time. Written records of accidents are maintained and shared with parents so they are aware of any injury to their child. All staff members hold relevant and up to date first aid qualifications, which means that children's health is safeguarded in the event of an accident.

Young children enjoy a varied menu of healthy snacks and drinks that help them to increase their awareness of good nutrition. They choose from a selection of fruits, bread sticks and toast at snack time. However, older children are able to choose sweet biscuits before and after school which may have a negative effect on their health. Allergies or dietary needs are discussed with parents as part of the registration process. These discussions are recorded, made available for easy staff reference and any needs accommodated. Older children in the Caterpillar Club ask for drinks should they become thirsty, whereas children in Bumble Bees help themselves to water from named drinks flasks throughout the sessions, which assists in ensuring that they do not become thirsty or dehydrated.

There are good opportunities for children to develop their physical skills as they use the adjoining playground equipment to climb, swing and balance. They are also given opportunities to use large sit on toys indoors in the spacious hall. They take part in a gentle warm up with staff before using parachutes to have fun whilst exercising. These steps have a positive impact on the children's well-being.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

The children have access to a playroom which is bright and airy. The children's work displayed on the walls makes it a child friendly environment and helps them to take pride in what they do. The hall is shared with other groups, meaning that the resources have to be put away each day. However, staff ensure that the children have a wide choice of appropriate equipment, toys and games to maintain their interest. There is sufficient child size furniture and equipment, such as small tables and different size chairs, to meet the needs of all children. The Bumble Bees group has large attractive floor cushions on which children can rest or play quietly which

enhances their welfare. However, the Caterpillar Club has no suitable furniture for the children to rest and this has a detrimental effect on their well-being.

Children visit the toilet facilities independently, which enables them to develop their confidence in managing self-care skills. There is a range of measures in place to support safety and help avoid accidents. For example, fire fighting equipment is in place and daily written risk assessments are completed prior to the setting opening. Children learn to share responsibility for their safety through meaningful activities, such as tidying away toys and taking part in emergency evacuation drills in conjunction with the community centre. Children's safety is ensured through the effective security of the premises. Outer doors have a buzzer and internal doors are kept locked so pre-school children are not able to leave unsupervised. Although the internal door is unlocked for the Caterpillar Club, an appropriate collection procedure, where parents sign the register when they collect their children, maintains the security of the older children.

Children are safeguarded as staff have a sufficient understanding of child protection. Staff from each group discuss any concerns with their managers who are confident in implementing the setting's child protection procedure.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy coming to the groups and have fun here. Staff work hard to support new parents and children in the separation process and, as a result, children settle quickly. Young children leave their carers and enjoy access to all available activities and resources. They are well included at groups times, such as snack time, circle time and outdoor play. Sessions are organised to allow key staff to work with younger children on focused activities, such as listening to stories and making articulated card figures. Older children have free choice of the activities set out by the staff. They have good relationships with staff, they are confident and comfortable, they seek support with their activities when they need it, and enjoy chatting to the adults who care for them. Staff listen to children, respond to their comments and use praise constantly, increasing the children's self-esteem.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals as staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff also have very good knowledge of individual children's attainments and use this knowledge to challenge and extend their learning within the daily routine. Observations provide evidence of achievements but these are not used to guide future planning which means that some opportunities to extend individual children's learning may be lost. However, staff are currently amending the formal planning to include the information gained from assessments. Children's development records include photographs of them involved in activities and notes detailing their achievements which gives a clear picture of their attainment.

Sessions offer a good balance between adult-led and free choice activities. Key staff work closely with the children on focused learning. Staff are skilled at using incidental learning opportunities with the children. For example, discussing and naming colours when painting, counting when sharing stories and helping them to recognise their name cards at snack time. Children are confident and have good relationships with staff and each other. Children greet each other warmly and join together in games and activities. They show good levels of

concentration when building towers of bricks or when playing a domino game. Children are gaining independence as they wash their hands and take off their coats after being outside.

Children enjoy listening to stories both in large and small groups. Staff ensure books are well displayed in the book area of the playroom and are accessible to all the children. Children have many opportunities to recognise their own name or that of their friends. For example, they find their name card when they come in in the morning, they recognise their name card at snack time and there is a name card board in the mark making area to support their early writing. Some children are beginning to form letter shapes and are able to write their names. Children are good communicators, they interact well with each other and with the adults who care for them. They confidently discuss events from home, such as birthday parties and other family events. Children learn about numbers and counting as they are encouraged to count when playing maths games and when singing songs in circle time. They extend their mathematical vocabulary as they build towers and compare sizes. However, there are very limited opportunities for the older children to develop calculation skills which may hinder their progress in mathematics.

Planned activities offer a range of practical experiences to enable the children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, when planting seeds, staff use skilful questioning to encourage children to explore the resources using all their senses, asking children to feel and smell the seeds and compost. Children ask and answer questions with confidence and enjoy discussing the activity with staff. Planning, resources and activities for information technology (IT) are very limited which means that children have insufficient experience in this area of the curriculum. The manager is aware of this and has identified IT as an area for development. Children use dough with tools, construct with large and small bricks, thread beads, and manipulate small jigsaw pieces, pencils and paint brushes to develop fine motor skills well.

Children enjoy many opportunities to enhance their creative development. They paint, draw and construct with card. They have opportunities to develop their musical ability as they sing together in circle time and perform for their parents and carers at Christmas. Children engage in imaginative and role play, using the good quality resources provided. Staff support this by being involved in their games and reinforcing their ideas. For example, when playing in the role play area, cooking a meal, children served the food to the practitioner who pretended to eat it with relish. The children responded with delight, showing their enjoyment with beaming smiles. Children have fun and enjoy being at the nursery and they are able to name their favourite activities and friends.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed and included within the setting. They play an active part in the provision, making choices about activities and helping to tidy away resources. Children have access to a reasonable variety of resources to help them gain an awareness of diversity. They are confident as they are praised for their achievements; staff listen to the children's comments and respond appropriately. Staff are experienced in sensitively meeting children's additional needs which they do by working in close partnership with parents and other professionals. Children know that they are all valued and included, and are generally well behaved. They are polite and listen carefully to each other at circle time and when discussing the days events during an after school art activity. Parents comment on the friendly welcome they receive from staff and that their children are happy here.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children benefit from the staff's friendly relationship with parents. They are provided with written information about the setting, the early years curriculum, the group's policies and procedures, prior to a child commencing in the group. They are kept up to date through the parents notice board, newsletters and informal discussion with staff at either the beginning or end of the sessions. Staff complete scrap books with photographs of children engaged in activities so that parents can see how the children spend their time here. Children's progress is recorded in individual files and are these shared with parents on request. However, parents are not asked to contribute to children's initial assessments and they have very limited planned opportunities to discuss and review children's educational records. Progress reports are given at the end of the year on an informal basis. Parents have very positive comments about the good atmosphere and friendliness of staff and the good job done on increasing children's confidence and independence. Children's spiritual, moral, social and emotional development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is adequately supported by the appropriate organisation of the pre-school and deployment of the staff in the Out of School club. The daily routine and play areas are organised to allow the children access to a range of different play opportunities, which help to support their development and learning. Most documentation is in place and up to date. The complaints procedure reflects current practice, however, the contact details for Ofsted are incorrect. In addition, the procedure for uncollected children is not available in the policy documents so parents and staff do not have all the information they need which may have a negative impact on the children's well-being. Satisfactory recruitment and induction procedures safeguard children.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff have appropriate experience and qualifications, a sound knowledge of childcare and benefit from regular in-house training opportunities. These are identified by the manager to help staff to keep up to date and further their knowledge of childcare and education. However, staff files contain documents that are out of date and some documents are missing or kept elsewhere. This means that not all staff information is readily accessible. The staff work well as a team and meet on a regular basis to plan the educational provision. The group is aware of their strengths and the manager is passionate to improve the education provision. They welcome support from the local authority advisory staff to aid the development of the provision. Planning and assessment systems for the children are currently being evaluated and revised with this support. There are some systems in place to monitor quality, such as staff appraisals.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the Bumble Bees Pre-School group was asked to provide an action plan showing how policies and procedures will be in place for the pre-school and how these will be made available to staff to ensure that they are familiar with them. The policies are now in place and staff are familiar with them, which has a positive impact on the children's well-being. They were asked to devise an action plan showing how information will be made available to parents. Parents have access to information on a notice board containing information, such as policies, planning newsletters and menus. This benefits the children enabling continuity of care. The

setting was asked to ensure that an accurate record of visitors and staff is maintained. Both groups now have a visitors signing-in book which means that children's security is maintained.

### **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 satisfactory. 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 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):

- increase healthy eating options for older children
- provide a rest area with suitable furniture for the Out of School club.
- update staff files to ensure that information is to hand
- ensure that the policy documents are updated to include the correct details for the regulator and the setting's procedure for uncollected children.

#### **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):

- develop activities and resources for IT
- increase regular opportunities for learning in mathematical development with regard to calculation.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)