

Stoneycroft Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY338566
Inspection date	02 May 2007
Inspector	Michele Anne Villiers
Setting Address	Corinthian CP School, Inigo Road, Stoneycroft, Liverpool, Merseyside, L13 6SH
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Registered person	Stoneycroft Children's Centre
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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?

Stoneycroft Children's Centre opened in 2006 and is part of the Sure Start initiative. It operates from several rooms within a purpose built building on the same site as Corinthian School. It is situated in a suburb of Liverpool. A maximum of 58 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 65 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and also those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 11 members of staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff take positive steps to help protect children from the risk of cross infection. The play areas are clean and well maintained, and staff wear disposable gloves when changing nappies. Children learn about personal hygiene. Older children know to wash their hands after using the toilet, and posters, pictures and written words are displayed as gentle reminders. They also learn about dental care, with visits from the dental hygienist. Staff remind children to correctly dispose of any food that has fallen on the floor and not to eat it, 'because of the germs'.

Children are very well nourished and enjoy nutritionally balanced meals. At lunch time they tuck into home made chicken pie, croquet potatoes and green beans. Fruit is made freely available for children to help themselves. Meal times are social occasions where children chat to each other and pour their own drinks. Children's cutlery is provided and babies and toddlers may independently use their fingers. Children help themselves to drinking water to quench their thirst, and milk is also offered. Children learn about healthy foods through play. They re-enact the 'Greengrocers' in role play, buying and selling plastic fruit and vegetables, and they look at books, such as 'Oliver's Vegetables'.

Regular physical exercise and fresh air are actively encouraged to promote the children's health and development. Outdoor play is incorporated into the daily routine. Children freely move between indoors and outside to access a variety of activities, such as painting, role play, construction, sand, water and wheeled toys. Older children have a large area in which to run around. They develop excellent balancing and coordination skills on the outdoor equipment. Indoors, children have use of a large hall for energetic play. 'Sports Link' provides weekly circuit training and fun games for all the children, with a qualified instructor. Babies learn to crawl and walk with good support from staff. Young children become competent at climbing steps and taking risks in a safe environment on indoor equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff vigilantly monitor visitors and the premises are very secure. The main entrance has a reception area and all internal doors are kept locked. A 'fob' system is used by staff to access the premises, and surveillance cameras operate in all communal areas and on the outside of the building. There is a password system for the collection of children and photographs of those regularly collecting children are obtained for extra security. Children access excellent safe and suitable furniture and play resources that meet their individual needs. All toys are new and meet safety requirements.

Staff conduct a daily risk assessment on the premises and toys, helping to minimise hazards. Children learn about safety throughout their play. They are reminded to be careful when running around. Outside, staff identify that a static balancing apparatus is broken and unsafe. Children are made aware of this as staff read the attached notice, 'Out of use', and explain to children what that means and demonstrate where the equipment has broken and why it must not be used. Children further learn about keeping themselves safe with visits from the local police, who arrive on horseback, to talk to children. In role play children have fun dressing up as police, fire fighters, doctors and nurses. Children practise the fire evacuation procedure with staff, and babies are safely transported in an evacuation cot.

Children are further protected as staff have a good understanding of 'Safeguarding Children'. They have attended training on child protection issues and 'Sudden Infant Death Syndrome'. Babies and young children are closely supervised, and sleeping babies are checked every 10 minutes. All babies under the age of 12 months sleep in a cot and staff monitor the temperature of the room. The effective key worker system enables babies and children to form close relationships with staff, fostering their emotional well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children happily settle in the nursery and progress well in their all round development. The environment is creatively organised and children access a good range of stimulating activities. Emphasis is focused on children learning through experience and their own interests. Staff sit on the floor with babies, playing and closely interacting with them. They foster communication skills through voice intonation and facial expressions. Babies respond with eye contact and smiles. Staff react quickly when babies become upset, giving them cuddles and gently singing to them with a calming effect. There are many sensory toys that produce musical sounds and visual displays. Young children become engrossed in their play as they attempt to stack blocks on top of one another with good dexterity. Staff question the children with 'Where do you want that block to go?' to help foster their language and thought processes. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories, pointing to the pictures.

During a lotto game children learn to make connections. They listen to sounds and find the picture to match the sound, such as an animal or telephone. Children then match their picture to the corresponding picture on a group of cards. Children explore a range of different media. They feel the texture of play dough, squishing it with their hands and making patterns using cutters and shapes. They have fun playing in the sand and water. The children's independence is very much encouraged. Staff allow young children to practise pouring their own drinks, even when spillage occurs. Planning is used to provide a good balance between adult directed and child led activities. Staff have attended training on the 'Birth to three matters' and have started to introduce the framework, although this is not yet fully implemented. Staff use observation to monitor the children's progress. They have devised a system to record their progress, using the components of the 'Birth to three matters', but this has not yet being fully incorporated.

Older children are integrated into the school nursery class for some play sessions. They enjoy a wide range of art and craft, and their creativity is fostered well as they freely express their own ideas and interpretations through painting and drawing. They have fun using hand puppets in the theatre, and use their imagination as they play with small world people in the toy house. Children demonstrate good concentration as they sit and listen during circle time. They develop mathematical concepts and count how many children are lined up to go outside. Staff incorporate a song to make the learning interesting, singing 'Three little soldiers standing in a row, one, two, three and out we go'. On arrival children self-register, selecting their written name cards. They begin to recognise that print carries meaning and captions and labels are displayed around the room. Staff plan and provide interesting topical activities, such as the life cycle of the frog. Children examine tadpoles swimming in a water tank, and props are used to reinforce their learning, such as puzzles, books and pictures. Nursery staff work with the teaching staff and use the Foundation Stage to help support all children to progress towards the six areas of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children confidently contribute to the life of the nursery and develop a strong sense of belonging. They become aware of their culture and the culture of others when celebrating events, such as Birthdays, St. George's Day, and Chinese New Year. Older children are introduced to another language as they learn simple French words each week with a teacher. There are some toys and resources that reflect positive images of race, culture and disability. Young children play with different cultural dolls, and dolls that have walking aids and a wheelchair. However, these are not fully integrated throughout the nursery. There are limited toys and displayed images for the older children to help them learn about the diverse world in which they live.

Staff work closely with outside agencies, link workers and parents to support and integrate children with additional needs. All children are very well behaved and cooperative. Staff reinforce the children's good behaviour through consistent praise and encouragement. They clap and cheer the achievements of young children and encourage all children to share and take turns. Staff demonstrate good role models, using 'please' and 'thank you'.

Children benefit from the close and supportive relationship that staff form with parents. Information is shared through daily discussion, newsletters and the parent notice board. Staff complete individual daily diaries on babies and young children for parents to take home. Parental involvement is very much encouraged and parents may phone direct to the baby room to speak with staff. Open days are organised, enabling parents to meet with staff and become familiar with the nursery routine and their policies and procedures. There is a nominated parent who attends staff meetings in order to contribute their thoughts and ideas.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for by qualified and experienced staff. There are effective recruitment and vetting procedures in place. Staff receive a comprehensive induction programme that includes training on health and safety and safeguarding children. Good contingency arrangements help ensure that staffing ratios are met. All staff have specific roles of responsibility and there is a designated room supervisor to oversee the care and welfare of the children and monitor other staff. Regular staff supervision and team meetings identify any training needs.

The play space is well organised. It is bright, with plenty of natural light, and very welcoming for parents and children. There is a wealth of children's artwork, posters, tactile materials and information displayed. Children also access a sensory room where they can experience an excellent range of visual and sound effects, and explore different textures within a comfortable environment. All regulatory documentation is in place with many comprehensively written policies and procedures for the effective management of the nursery. 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.

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):

- continue to effectively use the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- increase the number of toys and resources that reflect positive images of race, culture, disability and gender for older children to freely access.

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