

Meridian Childcare

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY345050
Inspection date 17 April 2007
Inspector Ingrid Szczerban

Setting Address Meridian Centre, 59 St.Paul's road, Bradford, BD8 7LS

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Registered person Shamim Khan

Type of inspection Childcare

Type of care Sessional 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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Meridian Childcare is run by a committee. It operates from two rooms in a purpose built property in the Manningham area of Bradford, West Yorkshire. A fully enclosed outdoor play area is available. The setting offers sessional care for families from the mainly Asian community and also provides a crèche for parents attending courses run in the adjacent building.

The setting is open all year round for the crèche facility and during term time for the playgroup. It opens each weekday from 09.30 to 11.30 and from 12.30 to 14.30, and is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children from birth to five years at any one time. The setting currently supports children using English as an additional language.

Seven members of staff are employed to care for the children, one is a qualified teacher, two are qualified to Level 3 and the others are working towards achieving either a Level 2 or 3 qualification. They receive support from the local authority and Bradford Under Fives Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean, well maintained environment where effective procedures and practices ensure that children's physical, nutritional and health needs are addressed. The staff provide sufficient support and guidance to ensure that children develop an understanding of hygiene. Children are protected from cross infection through the use of good hygiene practices, such as implementing the sickness policy and the regular washing of toys and equipment. All accidents are recorded and countersigned by parents. However, entries in the records do not always state the specific part of the body that has been injured.

Children's awareness of good eating habits is promoted by the provision of a healthy snack policy. They are offered only healthy drinks and snacks at each session. They receive milk or water to drink and fresh fruit. The individual dietary needs of children are fully considered to promote their well-being.

Children enjoy a range of physical activities which contribute to their good health. They have regular access to physical activities both indoors and outdoors. They delight in being outdoors, showing good control over their bodies as they climb up a steep ramp onto the large boat shaped frame and slide down the other side. Children can throw and catch balls, thereby they develop hand-eye coordination. They improve their balancing skills as they kick footballs into the goals. Babies rest and sleep according to their individual needs, so that they remain healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children move around safely and freely in the well organised setting. Bright displays and colourful posters make the environment interesting and welcoming for children. However, the display of children's own artwork which enhances their sense of belonging in the setting, is very limited. Children are kept safe as the majority of potential risks are identified and minimised by staff through good practices. The only exception is a couple of electric sockets that are exposed and therefore potentially harmful to children. Children learn about their own personal safety and the safety of others through the regular practising of fire drills. Access to the building is secure to keep children safe, closed circuit television is used and all parents and visitors must use the intercom to gain entry.

Children use a range of safe, good quality, developmentally appropriate toys and equipment, which helps to keep them from harm. Children initiate their own play freely because all their toys and resources are stored and set out at child height, to enable self selection and foster independence.

Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection issues and understand the correct procedures to follow, should the need arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are well-settled at the setting and enter confidently. They are greeted on arrival by a warm and affectionate staff team who ensure that children feel secure and happy in the setting.

The routine allows for children to have ample time to play freely according to their interests. Children come together for story time when they are captivated and fully engrossed in helping to tell the tale of The Hungry Caterpillar. They enthusiastically join in singing sessions, they perform the appropriate actions and sing with gusto. Thus they develop good language skills, socialisation and increase their self-esteem. Children in the crèche receive excellent levels of support from staff which promotes their emotional well-being. They explore the properties of sand, repeatedly scooping up handfuls and watching with fascination as it trickles through their fingers. Young children show good levels of interest and concentration for lengthy periods of time as they choose their preferred activities.

Children communicate well. Effective questioning is used by staff to make children think and talk about what they are doing. Children have good physical coordination and take great pleasure in movement. They move freely between playing inside and outside. Their fine physical skills are developing well, they can use chalks, scissors and glue spatulas with increasing control. Children learn how to see to their personal needs, such as using the toilet, taking off their own coats and washing their hands when they have finished with craft activities.

Children show a keen interest in numbers. Everyday situations are used well to develop mathematical skills such as counting the pieces of crepe paper being stuck onto children's artwork. Children enjoy creating using a variety of tools and malleable materials. They use their hands, rollers and cutters to shape and to roll play dough. Children are motivated to learn about the world around them through the planning of stimulating activities which are designed to engage them. Resources, such as plastic insects and books, are used effectively to support activities. They are fascinated to learn about the life cycles of insects, such as butterflies and know about their stages of development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about other ways of life through planned themes and festivals, and by listening to music from around the world. They see a diverse world reflected in the books and play equipment they use and learn to value people's differences because their own individuality is treated with respect. Children who use English as an additional language are supported by bi-lingual staff. However, insufficient information is requested about children's home language and religion, prior to admission. This hinders staff in being able to plan for children's individual needs in advance. There are suitable systems in place to support children with learning and physical disabilities.

Children are very well behaved in response to the high expectations of staff who talk to children with respect and set good role models for them to follow. They know the boundaries because staff give clear, consistent and simple messages about what is acceptable and preferred behaviour. Children receive meaningful praise and encouragement which helps them to feel pride in their achievements.

Children benefit from the good partnership developed between staff and parents. Children are cared for according to parent's wishes which promotes continuity of care and their well being. Parents are welcomed into the setting and are encouraged to help settle their child through gradual introductory visits. There are effective systems in place to ensure information is shared on a regular basis about children's progress and daily activities, for example through daily chats and access to development records. Policies and procedures are available to parents and noticeboards are used to update parents on any changes and forthcoming events.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Space and deployment of staff are used effectively to meet the needs of the children and enhance their well-being. Children are given good levels of individual attention. There are satisfactory procedures in place to vet staff to ensure that they are suitable to care for children. Adult child ratios are consistently maintained and staff are suitably qualified in early years. Staff are supported well through regular supervision, an annual appraisal system and ongoing training is encouraged. However, only one member of staff (who is currently on maternity leave) has completed training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework. This results in lack of clarity about the planning of activities for the younger children.

Documentation is well organised, stored confidentially, and meets the requirements of the National Standards. Appropriate parental permissions are sought, such as requesting consent for seeking emergency medical treatment or advice and permission for outings. 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 satisfactory. 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):

- develop consistency in the accident records to ensure that the exact part of the body injured is always specified
- display more of the children's own art work within the setting
- ensure that all electric sockets are made inaccessible to children
- request information from parents about children's religion and home language prior to admission

- develop the knowledge and understanding of all staff working with children under three, of the activities which can be planned to enhance outcomes for children, such as consistently using the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

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