

# The Caterpillar Club

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 113574  
**Inspection date** 24 April 2007  
**Inspector** Rosemary Musgrove

**Setting Address** Leechpool Primary School, Leechpool Lane, Horsham, West Sussex,  
RH13 6AG

**Telephone number** 01403 211388

**E-mail**

**Registered person** The Caterpillar Club

**Type of inspection** Integrated

**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](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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Caterpillar Club opened in January 2001. It operates from a pre-fabricated building within the grounds of Leechpool County Primary School in Horsham. There is an enclosed outdoor play area. Although independent, it has close liaison with the school. It is run by the manager with the support of a parental fund raising committee. The group mainly serves families from the local area.

Registration is for a maximum of 18 children at any one time. There are currently 68 children aged from two to eight years on roll. Of these, 30 receive funding for nursery education. There are currently no children on roll with learning difficulties or disabilities or who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five mornings and four afternoons each week during term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 12:00 and 12:30 to 15:00 from Monday to Friday. There is also a daily after school club that operates from 15:00 to 18:00.

There are eight members of staff and the majority of these hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Local Authority and from Sure Start.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of exciting activities, which contribute to their health and physical development. Each day they participate in outdoor activities and gradually acquire the skills necessary to control their bodies. Children move confidently on a wide range of different wheeled vehicles and show an awareness of others as they manoeuvre. Two children really enjoy sharing the stepper wheeled vehicle. This helps them to work together and to develop a good level of co-ordination.

The majority of staff have a current first aid qualification. This means they can administer first aid in the event of an accident. The setting has clear written guidelines on sick children. If children have an infectious disease, they do not attend. This means that other children do not catch unwanted illnesses. The setting requests written parental permission to seek emergency medical treatment and they maintain appropriate records if a child has an accident. If children need medicine, written parental permission is requested and the details and medication are securely stored.

Children are looked after in an environment that is clean and hygienic. They learn the importance of good personal hygiene through gentle reminders from the staff. Pictorial posters in the toilets also remind children about the importance of washing their hands. Generally, children show good levels of independence in their toileting skills.

Lunch and snack times are a sociable occasion. Children sit at a table with their friends and staff and talk about important events. Children bring healthy snacks from home, including grapes, apples and strawberries. The staff encourage children to think about a healthy diet and chat with them about the food they are eating. Children help themselves to their own drinks whenever they are thirsty. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from playing in a child-friendly, welcoming and well-organised environment. There are attractive displays that arouse a young child's curiosity, for example, textures at a low level. This means that children touch and feel a range of different materials, including sponge and corrugated cardboard. The setting has a very good range of quality resources for use indoors and outside. At the beginning of the day, staff prepare a range of interesting and stimulating activities that support learning in a variety of areas, such as role play activities or creating a model. Children independently select their own resources because they are organised well and easily accessible, for example, pens and paper in the graphics area. This means that children are able to make their own choices and decisions.

The premises are secure and staff have effective procedures in place for the safe arrival and departure of the children. Children take part in regular fire drills. They describe how they hear a whistle and have to leave the room. This means that they are beginning to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe. Staff are aware of potential hazards and check a number of areas before children arrive and throughout the day. These include any wet patches on the floor; however, formal risk assessments are not undertaken and recorded on a regular basis.

Good staff interaction helps the children to learn about keeping themselves and others safe. For example, when enjoying the wheeled vehicles outside they learn about road safety awareness and enjoy using the stop boards. There are procedures to keep children safe on outings and parents are asked to accompany their children. Adults wear brightly coloured florescent jackets in order to be clearly seen. In the event of a child being lost or uncollected there are clear procedures that give details of the required action.

Children in the setting are well protected because all staff have child protection training. They have a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse. The setting has the relevant documentation, knows what action to take and the procedures to follow if they had concerns about a child in their care.

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

The provision is good.

Children at The Caterpillar Club thrive because they are cared for in an exciting and stimulating environment. Experienced, caring staff take time to get to know individuals and build strong relationships. This means that children arrive happily, settle quickly and are absorbed in worthwhile activities throughout the session. The good staff ratio coupled with their dedication and enthusiasm means that children receive good support and encouragement.

Children choose from an impressive range of quality resources and activities. These are set up by the staff or easily accessed by the children, if they wish to choose their favourite resource. These include role play activities, dressing up clothes, construction equipment and a quiet, cosy area for browsing books.

The youngest children have developmentally suitable activities. They love moulding the play dough with their hands and enthusiastically talk about their very large dinosaur. There are plenty of opportunities for them to explore materials and objects using their senses. These include a variety of different textures and natural objects. Young children begin to develop their social skills as they play alongside a friend and discover the properties of sand and water.

Staff understand that young children develop at different rates. When planning activities or setting up resources they take this into account. Training on 'Birth to Three Matters' is planned for some staff during the year.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a competent understanding of the Foundation Stage and the areas of learning. The setting has good curriculum planning in place. This includes long, medium and short-term plans. Potential learning is a key feature of the medium term planning. This means that each child has the freedom to explore materials and take part in activities in a way that is appropriate for their developmental stage. Staff make regular observations of the children. These are recorded by the key worker and transferred to the child's developmental records. Each day staff record how children have responded and feed these observations into future activities.

Children are motivated and enjoy a range of activities. There is a good balance between adult-led and self-chosen activities. For example, children thoroughly enjoy talking about natural materials with an adult. They discuss the texture of nuts, feathers and stones and smell the fragrance of herbs, such as, lemon balm. Children's learning is enhanced by the member of staff who listens

to them, yet intervenes when necessary to take their learning forward. Self-chosen activities include playing in the hospital area. Children love using the stethoscope and pretend they are listening to their friend's heartbeat or give them medicine. Children are very independent. They take care of many personal needs, such as, hanging up their coat and filing their pictures in a sling folder. Children play well together and understand the need to take turns and to share resources.

Children are beginning to speak with confidence during role play activities, for example in the pretend hospital when they ask a patient what is wrong with them. There are many opportunities to develop early writing skills. A number of children are confident at forming letters and some can write their name. The graphics workshop is a popular choice and children choose from a variety of writing implements and pieces of paper. They begin to understand that writing is a form of communication.

Children take part in activities that help them to recognise numbers. For example, in a parachute game they all toss the dice and see which number is showing. However, children do not spontaneously use numbers and calculations in everyday events. Some children, with the help of an adult are able to count the objects in two sets and then join these together and find the total. Children's understanding of shape, space and measure is developing well. They explore and draw different shapes and are fascinated as they pour water or play in the sand tray.

Children have a wealth of quality experiences and learn about the world around them. They are very motivated on a mini-beast hunt. Each time the adult turns over a paving stone they are fascinated to see what lives underneath the stone. They are particularly excited when they find a very long worm and a spider. Their learning is enhanced by a good level of dialogue with the adult who responds to their curiosity and talks about the woodlice who curls up in defence. Children are confident in using information and communication technology. They demonstrate good mouse control as they drag a colour across the screen to create a picture. They then know how to print their drawing. A favourite activity is the programmable robot. Children enthusiastically press the directional keys to make it follow their chosen route. This encourages a good use of positional language.

Children have free access to a range of resources and materials. They demonstrate proficient skills as they use scissors, chalk and small spades. They eagerly join in rhythm stick activities as they listen to music from other cultures and shake their sticks to the calypso beat. Children learn to express themselves through a variety of mediums. They paint, draw and create their own models from a range of easily accessible resources.

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

The provision is good.

Staff are aware of children's individual needs and try to ensure that preferences are met, for example, they include children with food allergies in cooking activities. Staff encourage children to talk about things that are important to their family, such as, a special holiday. Children learn about a variety of different cultures. These include Chinese New Year when they make pig masks and experiment with Chinese writing. Imaginary play in the take away shop helps children to develop their speaking skills, for example, when they order their Chinese food on the telephone. During Diwali, children listen to Indian drum music, dress up in Indian clothes and make diva lamps. Children learn to think about the needs of others and take part in events, such as, Red Nose Day. There are strong links with the school, for example, some older children

come and play their violins to the younger children. These links help children to have a smooth transition to the school.

A named member of staff is responsible for providing appropriate care for children with learning difficulties or disabilities. She is enthusiastic about her role and has attended suitable training. Currently, there are no children on roll who have additional requirements. However, the setting has good systems in place to support a child if necessary. These include a process for early identification of needs, a policy statement and information about establishing an individual education plan for a child to ensure their needs are met.

Children behave very well and respond to any request for suitable behaviour. Staff are calm and consistent in their approach with young children. They encourage them to think about what they have done and if this was a good or bad choice. Staff talk with the children to explain the issues and then encourage them to say sorry. Children learn important social skills and are able to share and take turns. Staff are polite and courteous to each other and the children. Children benefit from praise and encouragement. This means they have a good self-esteem and a positive attitude to learning. These strong aspects of the provision foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. This contributes to the children's well-being in the setting. When a child starts, their parents receive a booklet. This includes a range of valuable information including staff details, information about the Foundation Stage and details of the key worker system. Parents have the opportunity to share their child's developmental record, this means they know about their child's achievements. At the end of the child's time in the setting, they take home a beautiful bound book of memories to share with their parents. This includes items such as, photos, pictures and dialogues. The setting has a complaints procedure in place, although they do not have a system to log a record of parental complaints. However, they are aware that any complaints received have to be recorded. Parents are happy with the setting. They appreciate the range of different activities, the information they receive, looking at their child's profile and the smooth transition to the main school.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by staff with a wealth of experience and a love of young children. They have suitable qualifications and attend regular training, such as, first aid, child protection and maths courses. This means that the care and support that children receive helps them to feel secure, happy and confident. Staff deployment is effective and children are well supervised. Staff have a clear understanding of their role and support children in their play and activities. All areas of learning are stimulating and well-organised. There are quality resources that are suitable for the age and developmental stage of the children.

The majority of documentation that is required for the safe and effective management of the setting is in place. This is generally well maintained and securely stored. A strength of the setting is the detailed child records. These are shared with parents on a regular basis and contribute to the continuity of the children's care.

Leadership and management is good. The manager is keen and dedicated. She regularly updates her knowledge by attending relevant courses. This ensures she has sufficient understanding of current childcare practice to enhance the care and learning of the children. The manager and staff are keen to evaluate and improve the provision. Recently, they have reviewed and

modified the arrangements for children to evacuate the building in the event of a fire. Staff have written training plans. This ensures that their professional needs are identified and that they attend suitable training courses. Effective recruitment procedures are in place and new staff receive informal induction. Staff have a weekly meeting. This enables them to plan for the following week, share training information and write up the child profiles.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the setting was asked to increase the number of children's books that reflect cultural diversity and to prepare an action plan on how children with physical disabilities can be included into the setting.

The setting now has a good collection of books that reflect diversity. These include dual language books and information books about different faiths. These help the children to develop an awareness of other cultures.

The setting has considered ramps and the local authority have visited the school. They have recommended that ramps replace some of the steps. This means that a child with physical disabilities would be able to gain access to the building.

### **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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **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 a system to keep a log of complaints received from parents
- review and extend current risk assessments to ensure children are kept safe at all times.

#### **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):

- provide more opportunities for children to count, recognise numbers and calculate in everyday situations.

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)