

The Park Child & Family Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY278820
Inspection date	10 January 2008
Inspector	Shirley Maynard
Setting Address	Sure Start Hyndburn, Norfolk Grove, Church, Accrington, Lancashire, BB5 4RY
Telephone number	01254 387757
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Registered person	Sure Start Hyndburn
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.

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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sure Start Hyndburn operates within the Park Child and Family Centre in Accrington, Lancashire. It is a local Sure Start initiative that is government funded and also a registered charity. There is a Board of Trustees and a number of other groups that support the Sure Start Hyndburn organisations.

Little Stars Neighbourhood Nursery Initiative is within the Park Child and Family Centre. It opened in 2004 and operates from three main rooms in a purpose-built building. A maximum of 40 children from three months to under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children have access to adjacent, enclosed play areas from their group rooms.

There are currently 63 children on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities, and also a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery presently employs nine staff. All of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment which is very welcoming to them and their families. Staff follow robust procedures to promote the children's good health. For example, there are always staff on duty who hold an appropriate first aid certificate and all accidents and incidents are recorded accurately and include parents' signatures. Children are starting to take some responsibility for their own good health as they wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. This is enhanced by staff providing liquid soap and paper towels so that the risk of cross-contamination is minimised. Tables are wiped in preparation for mealtimes and table cloths laid. Staff always wear freshly laundered aprons when serving food. These procedures contribute to helping children staying healthy.

Children benefit from being cared for in an environment which has a commitment to providing healthy and nutritious food. Fresh fruit and vegetables are provided daily and children develop a positive attitude towards mealtimes. Staff sit with them at mealtimes and discuss what is healthy. The children thoroughly enjoy a meal of salmon and cod fish cake served with potato wedges, side salad and salsa. This is followed by freshly prepared fruit salad. Staff encourage children as they develop their hand-eye coordination by using a knife and fork and even some of the younger children are very competent at this.

Children develop their good health and develop their physical skills as they access the secure outdoor spaces with soft play surface. The outdoor play areas are accessed from the rooms and benefit from being partly covered. This means they can be used in all weathers. Every room has its own individual area and an array of quality equipment is available. Children develop their large motor skills as they ride bicycles and scooters and climb on the climbing frame. However, the outdoor space is not always used and so opportunities for children to enjoy the fresh air and enjoy regular exercise are not maximised. Children also experience physical play inside which includes music sessions, encouraging them to move their bodies in a variety ways.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is well protected as a result of the staff's good awareness of health and safety and because all reasonable steps are taken to minimise the risk of accidents. A range of comprehensive risk assessments is in place and these are reviewed regularly. Staff are vigilant to ensure the environment is safe and welcoming to children. For example, visitors, staff and families arriving at the children's centre have to sign in at the main reception and again when arriving in the nursery; all visitor wear an identity badge to alert staff to them. Other safety features include daily checks to the outdoor play areas, socket covers and the required fire safety equipment is in place. Furthermore, regular emergency evacuations are undertaken and these are accurately logged. This means in the event of an emergency, staff and children are very familiar of what to do and so there would be no delay in leaving the premises.

Children move freely as they access all the areas in their specific room and develop a sense of belonging as they see the brightly displayed posters, their photographs and craft work on the walls. They are starting to take some responsibility for their own safety as they learn not to run inside, swing on chairs and tidy the toys away when they have finished. The extensive range of quality, safe and suitable toys and equipment are regularly cleaned and meet the development

needs of the children attending, for example, role play equipment, construction, small world equipment and some craft and malleable materials. Children play, relax and eat comfortably and safely as they use the child-size table and chairs and relax on the carpeted areas. The babies and younger children have suitable sleeping areas and carpeted areas where they sit and sleep safely.

Children's safety is paramount to the staff. All staff demonstrate a good understanding of child protection issues and the procedures to follow if they have a concern about a child. A recently updated policy is in place which ensures children are safeguarded and protected from any potential risk.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the nursery. They feel secure and comfortable because the staff team is now more established. Therefore, the children are able to build good relationships and adults in the setting know the children well. The rooms are set up into specific learning areas and children make some choices in what they want to play with from the activities which are laid out before they arrive. Children show some interest in what they are doing and are confident in the routines of the day. For instance, they know when it is snack time, free play and tidy-up time.

Staff have attended training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework and demonstrate a competent understanding of it. They use their knowledge to provide a balanced range of activities which meet the needs of the younger children, so promote positive outcomes for them. Younger children and babies are learning as they play. They freely access areas including role play, soft toys, imaginative play and mark making. Their play is well supported by staff who get down to the child's level, make eye contact and offer encouragement and praise. For example, children thoroughly enjoy a range of messy activities, including cold baked beans and dry pasta. Staff are on hand to sensitively question the children and this promotes their language skills as they are encouraged to describe how they feel.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff make regular observations of what the children can do and keep individual records, however, these do not record children's progress toward the early learning goals. Activities are planned along a theme, for example, numbers. However, plans do not provide sufficient links to the stepping stones, therefore staff do not know what children are expected to learn from each activity. As a result, older and more able children are not always sufficiently challenged. Furthermore, children's next steps in their learning are not identified. This means children's learning in all areas is not maximised.

Children are happy, self confident and eager to join in the activities, which are changed daily. They are eager to learn and use their good language skills as they enjoy talking to each other about their play. For example, after the children had enthusiastically made aeroplanes from bricks, they asked the staff and inspector why and how they fly. Unfortunately, the staff sitting with the children did not appreciate their questions about how things work and started to ask them about their recent holidays. Children's understanding of the wider world is enhanced through relevant topic work. For example, children learn about the festival of Eid during the topic of colours. This teaches children a secure awareness and respect for others and cultures. Quality resources, such as books, puzzles and dressing up clothes, reflect a multi diverse society.

Children are making steady progress with number recognition and counting aloud. They see some examples of number displayed in all rooms in the setting. Children learn about quantities in relation to every day objects. For instance, they enjoy counting the plates at snack time. Examples of children's work in their development files show that they learn to recognise and name basic shapes including circle, triangle and square. However, opportunities for children to show an interest in number problems and simple calculation on a regular basis are very limited. There are some opportunities for children to be creative. However, their individual creativity is not consistently developed because the activities are generally pre-prepared and adult led and there are few opportunities for children to independently access resources such as free painting, sticking and box modelling.

Children's early literacy skills are starting to be developed. Some children are able to recognise their own name. However, children are not encouraged to write their own names and there are few examples of letters, rhythm and written words around the nursery. Children listen well to staff at circle time and enjoy listening to stories, For example, the children actively listen to 'there was an old lady who swallowed a fly' and are confident in predicting what happened next. Some children are beginning to use pens and pencils to mark make. However, the equipment is very poor as the felt tips pens do not have lids and have dried out, and the crayons need sharpening. As a consequence, children are not inspired to access the area. Furthermore, the other areas of learning do not have any mark making materials accessible for the children to use.

Children develop their imagination as they use the role play area, currently set up as a shop, to develop role play scenarios. Children also develop their technology skills as they use the play phone and till. Although the computer has been broken for several weeks, children have some access to other equipment in the setting and are eager to use the colouring program with staff support. Children's physical development is promoted outside as children have opportunities to jump, and catch and throw various equipment outside. Although the outside space can be freely accessed by the children, it is not included in the planning and currently does not stimulate children's interest or promote their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children and their families are encouraged to play a full part in the sessions. The staff work effectively with parents to meet children's individual needs. There is an experienced designated member of staff who has responsibility for ensuring all children with a learning difficulty or disability are very well supported; any additional needs are identified quickly and support obtained without delay. Parents are fully involved and have a daily diary which they are also encouraged to use to keep staff up to date on the child's progress at home. Staff are currently learning Makaton to support children with any speech delay or difficulty and those whose first language is not English. This is to ensure all children can communicate with staff and each other and to make their wishes and feelings known.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. A good range of quality toys and resources are available which promote a positive view of different cultures, for example, books, games, dressing up clothes and musical instruments. However, positive images of disability in the play provision are limited. Children in the nursery behave very well as staff provide calm, positive role models and treat all children with respect, for example, saying please and thank you to them and encouraging them to tidy up. The children are learning to understand the difference between right and wrong. They are encouraged to take turns and to share the

resources. Children also respond to meaningful praise and encouragement, such as 'well done' and 'what a clever boy'. These strategies have a very positive effect on the children and as a result they are well behaved and play harmoniously with their friends.

The partnership with parents and carers in regard to nursery education is satisfactory. Children enter the nursery eagerly and settle quickly at the activities provided. Staff are deployed effectively and are available to offer assistance to children and their families. They clearly know individual children very well, this contributes to their sense of belonging. Daily verbal feedback after the sessions keeps parents informed of their child's day. Detailed information regarding the service is provided for parents in a welcome brochure. Information is displayed on the noticeboard and parents also receive regular newsletters about forthcoming events and activities, both within the nursery and within the children's centre as a whole. However, not all parents are fully informed about their children's learning or how the setting is providing a broad and balanced curriculum for their child.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The children are happy and settled within a safe environment. A key worker system is fully implemented and children benefit from regular routines of activities and mealtimes. They are well protected and cared for because all staff are vetted and deemed suitable to work with children. The recruitment and induction procedures are robust and very effective. Staff are positively encouraged and financially supported to access additional training, which is extremely beneficial to the children. This has included, first aid, child protection, nurturing children and Makaton.

A comprehensive range of policies and procedures is in place, regularly reviewed and updated. These are understood by staff and readily available to parents. This helps staff care for children appropriately and helps parents to be aware of how the nursery is organised. All the regulatory documentation to protect children's welfare is completed accurately, is up to date and stored securely.

The leadership and management in relation to nursery education are satisfactory. Children benefit from a motivated team who work well with them. The registered provider has delegated responsibility to the staff for the planning and delivery of the Foundation Stage. Although the staff know the children very well and know what stage they are at, they do not make the best use of observation to ensure the older and more able children are sufficiently challenged. Furthermore, children's individual records do not show their progress through the stepping stones or clearly identify the next steps in their learning.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to: improve the procedure regarding uncollected children; devise and implement a system for sharing all policies with parents; and develop the system of recording children's and staff's arrival and departure times.

The setting has worked well and the children's welfare is now fully protected. A new procedure has been introduced regarding uncollected children which links effectively into the child protection policy. All parents are made aware of the procedures taken if their child is not

collected by an appropriate adult. A new system of recording children's and staff's arrival and departure has been introduced. Parents and staff register at the main reception when arriving at the children's centre and again in the nursery. The actual arrival and departure times are accurately recorded on both records. These records give an accurate record of those on the premises, in the event of an emergency evacuation being undertaken. Effective systems are now in place for the sharing of policies and procedures with parents. A comprehensive booklet containing the policies and procedures is included in the welcome information and all parents receive this prior to their child starting at the setting.

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 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):

- improve the use of the outdoor environment to stimulate children's interest and promote their learning (also applies to nursery education)
- develop resources and play materials which promote positive images of disability.

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 mark making and improve the quality of the materials to encourage children to draw and give meaning to marks
- provide opportunities for children to show an interest in number problems and simple calculation on a more regular basis through everyday activities
- extend children's early literacy skills by helping them to have an awareness of letters, sounds and rhythm; develop regular opportunities for children to develop their creative skills

- develop children's individual records to fully show their progress through the stepping stones, clearly identifying the next steps in their learning, and use the information to differentiate activities for children's individual needs.

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