

Leasowe Early Years & Adult Learning Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY279600
Inspection date	02 July 2007
Inspector	Jean Evelyn Thomas
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Registered person	The Governing Bodies of Education & Cultural Services Department
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?

Leasowe Early Years and Adult Learning Centre has been registered since June 2004 and is provided by Wirral Children and Young People's Department. It operates from a designated area within the centre. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 97 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 with the exception of 5 staff development days, bank holidays and between Christmas and the New Year. The playgroup operates on Monday from 09.15 to 11.15 and on Tuesday from 13.00 to 15.00. Children come from the local area. The centre offers crèche facilities for parents attending courses, groups and drop-ins for advice on family health and employment opportunities.

There are currently 63 children aged from three months up to five years on roll in the nursery and playgroup. The setting welcomes children with learning difficulties and disabilities and those with English as an additional language.

The children's centre manager oversees the operations of the centre, including the management of the budget and recruitment of staff. She is supported by a management team which includes the nursery manager, a qualified teacher, a Foundation Stage consultant and a childcare

development worker. There are ten staff who work with the children in the nursery. All staff have early years qualifications to level two or three.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children have a good understanding of the importance of hygiene. The older children know that they must wash their hands at appropriate times of the day, such as before eating and after messy activities. The older children can independently visit the toilets and wash their hands. Children develop good awareness of how to care for their health needs. They put on their hats before going outside, when it is sunny, without prompting from the staff. Good health and hygiene policies and procedures help to protect children from the spread of infection including the sick child policy. The outdoor sand pits are covered when the centre is closed to prevent animals fouling them. All equipment is cleaned on a rotational basis and more often if required. Cleaning clothes are colour coded so they are only used for specific tasks. All staff have completed the food hygiene training to ensure the correct procedures are followed. All staff are qualified to administer first aid to meet children's needs in the event of an accident.

Children benefit from a healthy and balanced diet. Planned activities, such as food tasting, and discussion with staff further develops children's awareness of healthy eating. Their individual dietary needs are met as the provider records full information from parents.

Children enjoy a range of activities and equipment which promote their physical development. The large outdoor play area is used as an integral part of the children's daily activities. The under cover area and the sun shades allows children to play outdoors in all weathers. The centre provides protective clothing for children, such as wellington boots and waterproof trousers and coats. Babies and non mobile children have equal access to these areas. The risk assessment and safety procedures ensures all children can safely experience outdoor activities. The large apparatus is enjoyed by all ages of children. The youngest can use the beams for support as they stand and the older children develop their confidence and body control as they climb and balance. Children develop competent small physical skills through access to a range of equipment and activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and safe environment. Photographs of children at play and children's own work is attractively displayed. All centre staff are committed to ensuring the environment is maintained to a high standard. Staff plan the different environments to ensure children are stimulated effectively. For example, creating an indoor beach in the nursery using sand and shells. Resources are positioned at low level to encourage children's independence in making choices in the activity they pursue. Children select from a wide range of good quality age appropriate toys and equipment.

Children learn to keep themselves safe because staff are skilled in the way they talk to them about safety procedures and reinforce safe practices as they ask children to pick up toys, not to run and remind them to be careful. Staff raise children's awareness of road safety through topics, songs, and discussion. Children regularly take part in the emergency evacuation procedure. This affords them the opportunity to practise responding to an emergency in a calm

setting. There is a comprehensive risk assessment in place, which effectively minimises the risk to children and helps to keep them safe as they play freely. The high staff ratio ensures that children are well supervised at all times. The security device fitted to the entrance door ensures unauthorised persons can not access the centre, admission is only possible with staff agreement.

The good knowledge of child protection procedures demonstrated by staff helps to ensure children are protected from harm. They have a clear understanding of signs and symptoms that may alert their concerns. The centre's written statement includes the procedure to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and happy at the setting. They have warm relationships with the staff. The key worker system for the nursery children and the settling in procedures for all children contributes to this. Children in all areas of the provision benefit from well planned activities which are supported by enthusiastic and caring staff. The staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to inform their planning and practice. Staff use the observations they have made to help children make progress to the next steps of their learning and development. There is also differentiation in planning to ensure experiences are suitable for children's age and stage of development. Staff value spontaneity and respond to the interest of the children. Children notice the large puddles in the outdoor play area following the heavy rain. The children ask to play outside. The older children independently dress themselves putting on wellington boots and waterproof outer clothing. Staff dress similarly. Outside the children have fun in the puddles, moving their bodies in different ways to create splashes. From an early age children have many opportunities to explore and investigate, using their senses as they play. Babies make marks rolling olives in paint and explore the different textures of articles in the treasure baskets. Children learn to enjoy books and rhymes. Babies smile with delight as they clap their hands when listening to the older children and staff sing songs.

The current centre theme for activities is summer. The playgroup and crèche role play area is resourced with cameras, beach towels, bucket and spades to link into the theme. The children enjoy creative play and become immersed in role play using the resources and discussing their needs for their holiday. The younger children in the nursery are developing their imagination. They enjoy dressing up and walking around the nursery in their pretend role. Children develop their levels concentration as they complete jigsaws and table top activities. Children are supported by the staff who encourage children to extend their experiences and are involved in listening and talking to them and joining in their play. For example, at the water trough staff show children how they can control the flow of water from the container by varying the pressure of their squeeze on the side.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are enthusiastically welcomed into the setting by staff which contributes to their self confidence and sense of belonging. This is further enhanced as home routines are followed as closely as possible. The inclusion of all children is actively planned and monitored. Staff work closely with parents and professional agencies to ensure children who are disabled or have learning difficulties achieve their full potential. Children develop an awareness of diversity and

the wider community through a good selection of resources and activities that promote positive images of race, culture, gender and disability.

Children's behaviour is good. Children learn the boundaries and guidelines because staff are consistent and are very good role models, having high regard for the children and each other. Older children are self monitoring and remind other children not to run as they may fall over.

The partnership with parents is good. The effective partnership contributes significantly to children's well being. Parents are welcomed to the centre and to participate in activities with their children. For example, 'fun with food' where children and parents cook together and the 'peer early education partnership' scheme for parents to observe their children in play. Policies and procedures, menus and the nursery's operational plan are available to parents. There are displays about the 'Birth to three matters' framework to inform parents about the curriculum the staff are using to promote positive outcomes for the children. Written daily diaries keep parents updated on their children's routines and achievements. Parents are kept informed about their child's development through discussion with their key worker and they contribute to their child's development profiles. Information is given to parents to continue activities at home to support children's learning and development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by a well organised environment, which enables children to make choices from a very good selection of resources and to move around freely encouraging independence. The babies and children under two years benefit from the interaction and involvement with the older children in the nursery. They learn from watching and copying to promote their development. The designated area for this age group of children is currently not being used as their base to ensure their needs and outcomes are fully met.

There are robust recruitment and vetting procedures to employ appropriate staff. Systems are in place to ensure staff's continued suitability. For example, regular appraisals to determine staff performance and training needs. New staff receive a clear induction which ensures that they are quickly familiar with the policies and procedures. Staff work as an effective team, they are clear about their roles and are consistent in their practice. The manager and staff continually review their practice through staff meetings, self evaluation and seeking the opinions of parents and children. To achieve this with the children staff talk with them about their preferences and children are asked to take photographs in the playgroup and nursery. Staff used these results to identify children's interest and to build on this knowledge to improve.

The manager works with health and other professional agencies to provide services for children and parents within the centre. For example, there is a baby clinic and a weekly health visitors 'drop in' session. The crèche facilities enable parents to attend courses and training to develop skills for future employment. An employment support service is based in the centre.

The required documentation is maintained and is available for inspection. Most records are stored securely, with the exception of the accident book in the playgroup room and details of children's requirements for staff's information.

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 provider was recommended to provide a system to record any incident of necessary physical intervention. A form is available to record this information for children's well-being. It was also recommended the safety checks for the gas appliances is up dated to ensure they conform to safety standards. The latest certificate is available for inspection.

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 complaint 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):

- ensure confidential information can not be accessed by unauthorised persons
- make sure the designated area for the babies and children under two years is used as a base for aspects of their daily experiences to further enhance the outcomes for the children.

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