

Netherton Park Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY291750
Inspection date	11 September 2007
Inspector	Mary Kelly
Setting Address	Netherton Park Nursery School, Netherton Park, Dudley, West Midlands, DY2 9QF
Telephone number	01384 818255
E-mail	
Registered person	The Governing Body of Netherton Park Childrens Centre
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Netherton Park Children's Centre registered in 2004 and is located within the grounds of Netherton Park in Dudley. It is a purpose built building offering a range of early years services including nursery school and a neighbourhood nursery. The Kindergarten operates from a new, self-contained extension to the existing building. Care is conducted from three main base rooms with additional use of the main corridor as an area for communal use by the children.

A maximum of 50 children may attend the Kindergarten at any one time. There are currently 12 children attending who receive funded nursery education. A maximum of 48 children may attend the out of school and holiday club. The Kindergarten is open each weekday from 07:30 until 18:00 for 48 weeks of the year. The Out of School Club operates from the community room, nursery school or Kindergarten room. It is open Monday to Friday, term time, from 15:15 until 18:00. The holiday club operates during main school holidays, Monday to Friday, from 08:00 until 17.30. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. Children who attend are from the local community.

There are currently 72 children aged from birth to 8 years on roll. The Kindergarten supports children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language.

Eleven staff are employed to work with children in the Kindergarten. All staff have relevant teaching or early years qualifications. The setting receives support from local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from a very clean, comfortable and child-friendly environment. Their health is extremely well protected through substantially planned daily routines and children learning from example. The older children are confident at managing their own personal care, as they wash their hands before meals and after toileting. Staff support younger children in this area. They are aware that they wash their hands to 'wash off the germs'. This ensures that they are significantly well protected from cross-infection. The children's welfare is wholly promoted as many of the staff team have a current first aid certificate and can therefore respond to accidents professionally and appropriately.

Children are extremely well nourished and have excellent opportunities to learn about eating a healthy diet. They have access to a wide variety of fresh fruit, snack and meal times are very social times, where the children and staff sit together and talk about the day. Children are able to make decisions about what fruit they have and what they would like for their drink. Staff are already aware of the children's dietary requirements and have detailed discussions with the local school kitchen that provides the meals. Staff are able to steer the menu to healthy options as they like the children to have fresh vegetables and nutritious meals, All dietary needs are catered for. This ensures that all needs are fully met. Fresh drinking water is freely accessible at all times around the centre and younger babies are frequently offered drinks by staff to ensure they remain extremely well hydrated.

All children enjoy excellent, varied opportunities to extend and develop their physical skills. They have recently obtained a Jabadao bag, which is used to extend physical skills using fabrics such as rhythmic sticks and large pieces of material. Staff have attended training in delivering this and ensure that the children gain the most from the activities they utilise them for. Outdoors, children have access to a vast, safe space where children demonstrate their sense of space as they very successfully manoeuvre their bikes round the garden. All children enjoy being outside and have daily access to this area. Younger children have a separate area to ensure their safety at all times. The staff are very led by the children and what they like to do. They enjoy playing with tubes of various sizes and balls, as well as large cardboard boxes. They have access to a digging area which they enjoy enormously as well as the older children having access to all areas and use of gravel pits and woodwork tools. This ensures that they have real life experiences and learn through experimentation. The staff are always outside with the children very closely supervising and supporting them whilst they are getting the most from the outdoor experience. This ensures the children are safe and secure at all times. Children are well protected from the harmful effects of the sun as a comprehensive policy is in place and they have access to a shaded, covered area to ensure they are protected at all times. Children use the outdoor areas in all weathers as they have access to waterproof clothing and Wellington boots. This ensures that they can play outdoors in all weathers, whilst being very well protected.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

The vast layout of the setting allows all children free movement and access to a vast range of activities, this ensures that they have space to play, be active and to rest. They enjoy an excellent variety of toys and resources that are stored in boxes on low-level shelves enabling the children to easily choose what they want to play with. The setting is remarkably well resourced, and children have access to free-flow both inside and outside the nursery having many opportunities whatever the weather. These toys and resources are regularly checked for safety by staff to ensure they are extremely safe and interesting to use.

There is substantial precautions to ensure children's safety including socket covers, gated doorways and key coded entry pads on all of the doors from external areas and this ensures that the children are entirely safe in all areas. Staff ensure that these are utilised fully to protect the children effectively at all times.

The children's safety is effectively promoted because the staff take very positive steps to promote safety within the setting, when outside and on outings. The staff ensure well planned precautions are taken to prevent accidents and minimise identified risks to children by undertaking daily risk assessments of areas used by the children and additional risk assessments are done on any 'risky' activities such as fruit kebabs. This means children are fully protected in all areas and that staff are well informed about the importance of safety issues. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they are beginning to understand about safety issues within the setting and outside. Children display an exceptional understanding of how they need to keep themselves safe. They know they have to sit nicely on chairs otherwise they will hurt themselves, and that they do not walk around carrying scissors as they might 'hurt someone'. They have a well practised routine, and are substantially protected by the setting's policies and procedures.

Children are extremely well protected from harm because staff have an excellent, professional understanding of their role in child protection, especially of the known indicators, as many of them have attended child protection training. Referral procedures and updated information is available to the parents to ensure they too are clear of the procedure staff will take if they have concerns about the safety of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are valued, happy, settled and really enjoy coming to the setting. They are extremely confident, independent and continue to develop their self-esteem. They are very interested in the vast range of imaginative play opportunities that are available on a daily basis and settle quickly as they know the setting well. Children form close and extremely positive relationships with each other, and play and share well with each other. Excellent comfortable relationships are observed with staff who help develop children's confidence through very sensitive interaction and constant encouragement. Children have access to a very wide range of resources and are able to free-flow around all areas in the setting. They really enjoy building in the sand pit with real builders bricks, using hammers and drills in the woodwork area as well as recreating the indoor area outdoors. This fully promotes their independence. The staff take time to listen and converse with the children, most ask them open-ended questions, extend their knowledge and it is obvious that staff and children enjoy being in each other's company.

All children have their individual needs very well met. They develop a very good range of knowledge and skills because thoroughly well planned activities and play opportunities are provided to ensure that they achieve fully in all areas of their development. Staff provide flexible plans of activities, but are also instinctive with the children if something pertinent arises therefore allowing time for spontaneous activities. This includes extending topics by ensuring the children know more information such as how Giant African snails live. The daily routine is versatile, flexible and tailored to meet individual children's needs well, however the older children have many opportunities to be independent at the nursery and this needs to be reinforced when they come back to the kindergarten for lunch. These additional chances will encourage older children to be more confident and independent, especially at meal times. Staff communicate constantly to parents both verbally and in writing, therefore ensuring the individual needs of the children are met at all times. Children are able to suggest ideas for activities and staff provide spontaneous opportunities for these to be created. The free flow ethos of the setting allows the children to take many opportunities to create their own learning, effectively supported by the staff. Such as older children using bread baskets to build a construction and create a bridge that would take their weight. This involved risk taking also. Younger children are able to have the same opportunities such as writing in shaving foam and den building. This establishes their independence and supports their self-esteem.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The effectiveness of the curriculum planning and assessment for all funded children is good, however observations and assessments are not always fully informative and used to further enhance children's learning. All staff have a solid, understanding of the Foundation Stage and are enthusiastic in their delivery of both planned and spontaneous activities. The learning environment is extremely interesting and inviting to the children and all six areas of learning are given equal emphasis in curriculum plans. Plans outline learning intentions and how activities are adapted to meet individual needs. This ensures that all children reach their full potential. Valuable discussions are held between parents and staff to ensure that staff are aware of children's starting points to therefore enable the children to make progress. The children have many opportunities to revisit activities, allowing them to fully consolidate their learning. Staff substantially encourage the children to think and demonstrate what they know and understand through everyday activities and they have many opportunities to use real tools and utensils such as dustpan and brooms, pulleys and wheelbarrows. Most of the staff use open ended questions and encourage all children to take part and persevere with tasks. This is evident throughout the daily practice of the setting where staff encourage the children to involve themselves fully in opportunities provided.

Children really show care and concern for their friends, often giving cuddles, being kind and sharing books together, as they know each other well in the comfortable environment. Children's behaviour is very well managed and dealt with in an age-appropriate way. They are constantly praised for sharing and given subtle reminders that they are all friends and it is nice to share at nursery. Children remind each other of the acceptable behaviour in a calm and fair way, especially if they are aware that younger or newer children do not always know what is acceptable. This develops positive self-esteem and gives the children confidence to make the most of given opportunities. Children are given vast chances to use their independence skills, and have enjoyable opportunities to self select activities and resources. They are eager to help tidy away the toys. Their self-help skills develop well as they freely access the toilets and hand-washing facilities independently. They serve themselves fruit at snack time with the assistance of the self-service café and dress themselves confidently to go outdoors, even in the all weather suits and Wellington boots. Staff know the children extremely well and give

them support where needed. Through a wide range of activities they explore cultural events. This develops an appreciation of the world in which they live. They talk about things they have done and places they have been with their families and talk openly about their what they like doing, for example, how a child was going to build a house by putting layers of sand between the bricks.

Children develop their skills excellently across all aspects of communication, speaking, listening, reading and writing. They share home experiences with their peers and staff both in small and larger groups. They use their listening skills very well as they know that they need to wait to join in conversations. This is managed very well at group time at which the children all take turns to speak. The environment is rich in print. Children show a substantial love of books, they freely access the inviting and well resourced reading area where they share books with each other as well as with staff. Children have daily opportunities to write for a purpose both planned and spontaneously.

Children are developing number and problem solving skills through a variety of activities, and rhymes. They use these skills extremely well and this consolidates their learning and increasingly enhances their confidence. They sort, match and use puzzles and construction resources. They use everyday activities, as well as planned mathematical opportunities. Numbers are used around their environment and further develop skills of recognition of numbers zero to 10. Some more able children are able to count items up to 15 and some beyond. One child was able to tell me all the numbers on the bikes in the outdoor area and knew that five and seven was 57. Children are introduced to simple subtraction, recording the numbers of children present in their own group areas.

Children are enthusiastic and curious to take part in activities. They learn about living things through topic work and have made a worm world, and are following the life of Giant African snails of which they look at daily and feed them regularly. They have free access to a computer and are able to skilfully use the programmes and gain good keyboard and mouse skills to operate the programmes. Children enjoy sand and water play and they have many resources that they can access to make these interesting such as corks for floating and heavier objects as well as water wheels and funnels. Children look forward to well-planned, organised outings and were talking to the inspector about trips they have had with nursery. This is in addition to going on frequent, carefully planned trips locally, for example, to the park and have excellent links with the local community. This ensures they have access to many first-hand experiences outside the setting in their local environment.

Children have stimulating, delightful opportunities to engage in role play. They access these areas with wonderment. They are extremely well resourced and staff ensure that the children have a wide range of opportunities to enhance their imagination effectively. The role play area is varied on a regular basis and staff consult the children as to what they would like. The children are very enthusiastic to paint, skilfully able to put on their own aprons and selecting their own resources. They concentrate well when being creative, using a variety of brushes and many other utensils. They clearly understand the concept of colour, often stating what colours they are going to use. They are extremely proud of their art work and confidently point out pictures that they have done previously on delightful displays in the rooms. They confidently move to music and enthusiastically join in with singing of familiar songs and rhymes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children have a strong sense of belonging while at the setting. Children attend a very relaxed, close knit environment with strong attachments to their key worker, link worker and other staff. This helps them feel settled, confident and secure. Children take part in a wide range of activities that actively promotes their knowledge of the wider world. They fully explore cultural festivals, for example, Eid and Diwali and extend these opportunities by using music and food from the culture they are celebrating. The setting has a very welcoming atmosphere and is full of many positive images to promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. In addition children access a vast range of toys and resources that promote positive images of diversity, using these in everyday play situations to further promote equality through children's play. Children who speak English as an additional language are very well supported as staff are very proactive at working with parents. Parents are invited to join in any celebrations with their children and share additional information about their culture. This includes an already well planned Autumn celebration that will incorporate, Eid and Diwali.

The staff provide very sensitive, nurturing care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and provide excellent procedures to ensure they provide inclusive care and learning opportunities. They have professional links to external agencies and work strongly in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure that the individual needs of the children are met successfully. The setting has links on site with external agencies who are on hand to provide additional support if required.

Children behave exceptionally well and benefit from age-appropriate behaviour management strategies suitable to their age and understanding. Comprehensive guidelines are in place ensuring that children are aware of acceptable behaviour and they confidently remind each other of them. This works exceptionally well as the children's play is harmonious and positive. Staff consistently reinforce positive behaviour management strategies. For example, children are told how well they are doing. Children thrive on the very warm, consistent praise that the staff give them. High adult child ratios allow the children to have positive interaction and staff model good practice. Their excellent manners are praised at all times, for example, for sitting nicely or sharing with other children. Children require minimal prompting at saying 'please' and 'thank you' at appropriate times during the day. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents benefit from comprehensive, well-written information about the setting and have access to an excellent range of policies and procedures. They are able to freely access information regarding the development of their children at any time as well as planned opportunities. For the older children this is combined with nursery staff to enable the parents to access the information in one visit. Parents are able to have two forms of communication that they can access, either verbal communication or a communication book. They inform staff of their views through regular consultations and very regular opportunities for communication. Staff are flexible when settling new children, this is sensitively managed to suit both the children and the parents. This ensures that the children feel secure at the setting. Parents are very clearly informed of the setting's complaints procedure, have access to a compliments, comments and complaints box in addition to contact details are available to them in the event they wanted to make a complaint or compliment to the regulator.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Children benefit from strong relationships that they see between the staff and their parents. Verbal and written exchanges of information

occur daily. The older children have a link worker that ensures their transition from Kindergarten to Nursery is seamless and messages are passed on, ensuring there are consistent links in place. This ensures that staff and parents are well informed about the children's needs and progress. Parents receive valuable information regarding the Foundation Stage, stepping stones and early learning goals and have access to a parents' information board show evidence of how their children are developing. They are involved in their children's learning as staff inform them of the topics they are covering during the term and this is reinforced with monthly newsletters. They are encouraged to bring photos from home to forge the links between home and the setting, as well as many images for activities they become involved in during their time in the setting. Staff meet with the children's parents and this ensures that they are aware of the children's starting points and how they can move them forward in their all round development. This information is used to inform planning and assess the children's learning. Parents are invited to open evenings to formally discuss their children's progress and development, but there are frequent opportunities for informal discussion as well. Attractive displays of the children's art work and photos are visible and these are used to support the development records for the children's files and as a record of their nursery experience.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's well-being is positively promoted by the effective organisation of the setting. The staff at the setting are extremely dedicated and enthusiastic in providing good quality care and education. They are aware of their purpose in this professional role, and make excellent use of time, resources and attend many relevant courses to support and further extend their learning and knowledge.

Recruitment, vetting and induction procedures are effective and ensure staff are extremely well qualified. The management and staff work together passionately to create a strong, dedicated team. They are committed to giving a good level of care and constantly review their practice to ensure they are doing this and meeting the needs of the children. All staff are positive role models and children form very close relationships with them. Training for staff is given high priority and this ensures that they are always aware of the current requirements and legislation.

All of the required documentation that contributes to the children's health, safety and welfare is in place and is well maintained. Effective procedures are in place to ensure that it is reviewed and updated regularly. Policies and procedures are in place to reflect a good quality of care and are used positively as professional guidance. All documents are accurately organised and stored confidentially.

The leadership and management for early education is good. The management is committed and dedicated to ensure that the children receive good care and education. They actively ensure staff are aware of their practice, and endeavour to make necessary improvements, through planning, evaluations and regular supervision sessions. There is a strong commitment to assessing the strengths and weaknesses of both the setting and the educational programme offered. All staff are actively involved in the planning and evaluate activities. This ensures that all areas of learning are effectively covered and ensures that children are making significant progress in all areas of learning due to staff delivering a stimulating, highly successful education programme. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to improve the range of equipment for sleep and rest to meet the needs of all children. This has been achieved by additional sleep and rest equipment being purchased. They now have a defined area for rest and sleep which allows the children having a peaceful time to rest.

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):

- encourage older children to be confident and independent , especially at meal 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):

- ensure that observations and assessments undertaken on the children are informative and used to further enhance children's learning

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