

# Quarry Mount Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY103260
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Sessional care, Out of School 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](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?

Quarry Mount Children's Centre is one of many children's centres run by Leeds City Council. It opened in 2001 and operates from five rooms on site at Quarry Mount Primary School. The setting is situated in the Woodhouse area of Leeds. A maximum of 67 children may attend the children's centre at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 52 weeks of the year, apart from bank holidays. The children's centre closes early on a Thursday at 16.30, for staff training. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 42 children aged from 12 months to under 11 years on roll. Of these, 28 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the surrounding area. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 12 members of staff. Of these, most hold appropriate early years qualifications. The team work closely with outside agencies and access services provided by the local authority, with the emphasis on learning through play.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

The children benefit from the diet they receive as meals and snacks are healthy and nutritious; for example, the children have jacket potatoes with cheese and salad for their lunch. The nursery employs a cook, a menu is displayed for parents to see and meals are freshly prepared. Children have independent access to drinks at all times. For example, the older children can access milk from the fridge in the snack area or can access water from the water dispenser. All staff are fully aware of individual dietary requirements and preferences, which are discussed in full with parents. The staff treat mealtimes as an opportunity to help children enjoy their food and become independent in feeding themselves. Young children have many opportunities to feed themselves using their fingers and spoons.

The staff do take some positive steps to promote the good health of children. For example, soap and paper towels are available in the toilets and staff wear gloves and aprons during nappy changing. The nappy changing mat is kept clean and in good condition. Additionally, staff use different coloured cloths for cleaning different areas. Younger children are encouraged to develop good hygiene practices; for example, the staff encourage the children to wash their hands before eating all meals and snacks. The staff working with the older children have an inconsistent approach to promoting good hygiene routines. For example, older children are reminded to wash their hands before lunchtime; however, they are not encouraged to do this before snack time.

Good arrangements are in place for administering first aid and medication. There are fully stocked first aid kits available in both the laundry areas and three of the staff hold a current first aid certificate. Written policies are in place regarding sickness, accidents and administration of medication; these are fully implemented and shared with all parents.

The children have daily opportunities for fresh air and outdoor play, such as freely accessing the outdoor play areas. The children are able to play out in all weathers, as the setting provides umbrellas, boots and waterproof coats for the children to use. They also have excellent opportunities to be involved in movement play during each session; as a result, they move freely with pleasure and confidence. The children are able to use a good range of small and large equipment, such as hoops, balls, wheeled vehicles and balancing apparatus. The children also enjoy spending their time digging for treasure in the outside play area. They handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control, such as pencils, scissors and paintbrushes. They can manage their body to create intended movement, for example, while carefully placing a straw into their milk carton.

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

The provision is good.

The environment is very warm and welcoming with good evidence of children's play and activity; for example, the children's work is attractively presented on the walls. An excellent range of photographs of children at play are on display. The reception areas in both the under three year olds room and the over three year olds room are welcoming and informative. For example, the setting's registration certificate, staff photographs and useful leaflets for parents are on display. Also, each child in the over three year olds room has an individual tray and each child in the under three years room has their own bag for their belongings.

Toys and equipment are on low shelves and carpeting and the children independently choose their own activities. All areas are well resourced with good quality products which are mostly made of natural materials, such as wooden furniture and toys. The children have direct access to the outdoor play areas from each of the playrooms and the children happily free-flow in and out. As a result, the children enjoy playing outside and spend a great deal of their time outdoors.

Children benefit from a good range of safety measures; for example, the children are unable to access the laundry facilities and socket covers are in place. Additionally, staff thoroughly check the outdoor play areas before children are allowed to play outside. The children develop a good awareness of safety through practising emergency evacuations once a term. There are good staffing ratios in place. As a result, the children are supervised at all times, are unable to leave the premises unattended and are never left alone with persons who have not been vetted, for example, while 'stay and play' sessions are in operation. However, the system for managing access to the premises does allow unauthorised persons to gain entry.

Children are protected from possible abuse or neglect as staff implement child protection procedures which are robust, fully understood and work in practice. For example, the staff are very experienced in working in partnership with social services. They are skilled at recognising, recording and reporting concerns. All staff have completed child protection training and the setting's child protection procedure is shared with parents.

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

The provision is good.

Staff working with the younger children have attended 'Birth to three matters' training. They confidently implement the framework and the planning and assessment systems are very effective for this age group. Babies' emotional needs are well met as they receive plenty of individual attention and cuddles, for example, while being bottle fed. They are made to feel special by key persons and parents handing young babies directly to each other at the beginning and end of the day. Staff are effectively deployed so that a key member of staff is available to care for the babies and young children at all times.

The environment is well organised and activities are accessible and attractively set out. All areas are well stocked and all planned activities are taking place. During the session the children do have many opportunities to play and interact with staff and children in small groups, for example, in the movement area.

The children are very happy, settled and confident in the setting. They enjoy learning and are proud of their achievements; for example, one young child successfully stuck a wet sponge to the window and shouted 'I did it'. The children also have good opportunities to be involved in messy play. This is throughout all age groups, such as babies playing with water. The staff encourage the children to try new activities; for example, a three year old enjoyed mixing paints. The children are fully involved in their activities, such as playing in the home corner and cuddling the dolls.

The staff listen to the children; they are interested in what the children say and do. They also provide children with activities based on their individual needs and interests. For example, the staff introduced a topic on dragons, after listening to a child who was making a dragon in the creative area.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have attended training on the Foundation Stage and competently put this into practice. The activities provided are well matched to children's needs and interests. For example, the staff re-evaluate the planning on both a daily and a weekly basis. Detailed planning for focused and child-initiated activities ensures clear learning intentions are identified for children. Assessment records for each child clearly shows each child's starting points on entry to the setting and their achievements and their progress. They also show planning for children's individual next steps in learning.

The children settle quickly, part easily from their parents and enjoy the rich environment provided for them by the staff. The learning environment is appealing, with good quality resources which tempt the children's curiosity, such as torches. All children have a positive approach to new experiences and display high levels of involvement in activities, for example, while practising their writing skills. However, the children rarely go out on visits and very few visitors are invited into the setting. Therefore, there are limited opportunities for children to show an interest in the local environment.

The children have regular opportunities to work on their listening skills and they are able to distinguish one sound from another. For example, they play listening games and phonetically sound out initial letters. The children are able to write for different purposes; for example, they label their own artwork. Some children are able to write some recognisable letters as they are attempting to write their own name. The children handle books carefully as they hold books the correct way up and are able to turn the pages.

The children are beginning to use mathematical language during play; for example, they use words such as 'big' and 'little' to describe objects. They also count with enthusiasm and enjoy joining in with number songs and rhymes, such as 'Five Cheeky Monkeys'. More-able children can recognise, name and write numerals from one to five. The staff also provide the children with regular opportunities to solve simple mathematical problems, for example, while singing. Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals given their capability and starting points.

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

The provision is good.

The provision welcomes all children, putting into practice their equal opportunities policy by finding out about the children's backgrounds and then celebrating the festivals special to them, such as Diwali and Harvest. In this way, children feel at home and also learn about other people's cultures. Toys and other resources, such as books, dolls and posters help to portray positive images of the diversity of the world. The setting benefits from having a member of staff who can speak Creole as there are many children attending the setting who speak English as an additional language.

The staff team are experienced in identifying and working with children with learning difficulties and disabilities. As a result, the nursery has effective procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The staff team are committed to working in partnership with parents, the school and outside agencies to ensure children receive good support. For example, regular meetings are held and individual education plans are fully implemented.

There are positive behaviour management techniques in place, with the emphasis on praise and rewards. Children who are polite and helpful, for example, receive stickers. As a result, the children are very mannerly, saying 'please' and 'thank you' for their food at snack time.

Additionally, the children enjoy helping adults; for example, during tidy up time the children happily and quickly carry out allocated jobs. The children from the school reception class are successfully integrated with the children's centre children. The reception children are good role models as the children's centre children imitate the reception children's positive behaviour. For example, they are keen to participate in all activities, such as circle time, writing for a purpose and accessing the resources independently. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents have very good opportunities to share what they know about their child. This is done through regular discussions with staff, parents' evenings and an effective settling-in procedure, which includes a home visit. Staff give good attention to meeting babies' individual needs for eating, changing and sleeping and exchange this information with parents, for example, through the use of daily diaries. Further information is available through the setting's policy file, which is easily accessible to parents. The parents receive clear information about the educational provision, for example, through sending letters home. Occasionally, when the parents collect their children the interactive board will be set up, showing video footage of the various activities that the children have been involved in during the day. The parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning. For example, parents can stay and play with their children and are encouraged to use the mobile library which regularly visits the setting. They can easily access their child's development record and some of the parents are adding their comments and photographs to these.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The provision of additional services is a strength of the children's centre and some of these are well established. Good crèche facilities for parents enable them to enrol on training courses that will help them develop skills to return to work, making a valuable economic contribution to the wider community. There is a good selection of groups available, which positively promote the outcomes for children, enhancing the children's health, safety, care, well-being and opportunities. The staff at the centre work closely with other dedicated professionals from various backgrounds, such as health services and The Children's Society. The groups include: a maternity support group, a counselling service, credit union, job centre plus, five-a-day cookery course, a library bus and numerous other groups.

The senior management team and the staff have created an orderly, friendly and calm environment in which to care for the children. Each session is planned for in advance and the staff are effectively deployed. There have been recent staff changes and shortages; however, both the children's centre staff and the school's staff are all working extremely well as a team. The management team have kept children's numbers low in order to support staff. Therefore, the staffing ratios have remained consistently high and the children are given good support. As a result, all the children are very happy and settled. The deputy centre manager has recently taken up the role of acting manager until a permanent centre manager is appointed.

There are clear improvements plans in place, which are regularly implemented and reviewed. All staff are fully involved in planning, evaluating and developing practice, for example, through staff meetings, planning meetings and supervisions. Staff have regular access to relevant training, such as child protection. An established system is in place for staff and parent inductions. The registration system is effective and this clearly shows when staff, visitors and children are present, for example, there is are two visitors books, one in the under three's area

and one in the over three's area's. All the required documentation is in place, such as a complaints record. This information is easily accessible and stored securely.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The children's centre teacher provides very good leadership and has a keen understanding of how to organise and manage both staff and resources to provide an educational experience of very good quality. Planning is thorough and reflects appropriately the different areas of learning through long-term plans and a combination of child-led activities and focused activities. An outstanding feature of leadership has been the effective tracking and target setting for each child. For example, each child's development is thoroughly assessed as soon as they start attending the children's centre. As a result, the children are making good progress in all aspects of their development. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

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

Since the last care and nursery education inspection the partnership with parents has been strengthened as the setting has made the complaints procedure accessible to parents. They have also provided the parents with a comments box. Hygiene procedures have been improved as the staff have continued to develop children's understanding of the importance of hygiene regarding hand washing. For example, a health team visited the children's centre as part of 'the clean gang extravaganza'. The children also had the opportunity to look at the germs under an ultra violet light. The children's bathroom in the over three year olds area has benefited from being redecorated, making it a much more pleasant environment for the children to wash their hands. The management team have established ways to ensure the quality of the educational provision has been maintained, through effectively monitoring the curriculum, the children's starting points and their progress. The setting has also taken part in a government initiative called 'sustaining success'.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- continue to raise the children's awareness of good hygiene practices in relation to promoting hand washing prior to snack time
- improve the system for managing access to the premises.

### **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 opportunities for children to show a greater interest in their local environment.

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)