

# Sheffield Childrens Centre Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	300808
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Sarah Gilpin
<b>Setting Address</b>	Shoreham Street, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S1 4SR
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<b>Registered person</b>	Sheffield Childrens Centre Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 satisfactory. 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?

Sheffield Children's Centre Ltd is a community nursery providing full day care. The nursery is owned and managed by the committee of Sheffield Children's Centre Ltd. It was established in 1985 and moved to these premises in 1993. The setting serves both the local and wider communities.

The nursery operates from a single storey building, incorporating play rooms, training room, parents room, meeting room, out of school care, kitchen and staff facilities. There are also outdoor play facilities. The setting is open from 08.00 until 18.00 each weekday throughout the year.

The facility is registered to care for 54 children from birth to five years and 32 children aged five to eight years. There are currently 107 children on roll, of whom 23 are in receipt of funded nursery education. There is provision for children with disabilities and learning difficulties and for children for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery employs 21 staff, which includes three managers. Of these, 14 hold appropriate childcare qualifications and others are on training programmes. The setting receive support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The children's health is being promoted by the staff who ensure the environment is clean and hygienic. They implement the setting's health and hygiene procedures, for example, they carefully clean tables, which the children sit at for their meals. Children are beginning to understand about good personal hygiene because the staff consistently remind them to wash their hands before they eat or after they use the bathroom. Clear and effective systems for administering medication to the children are in place, however, the recording of administrations is inconsistent. Children's welfare is promoted because the staff attend first aid training and fully stocked first aid boxes are located around the setting. There are very clear systems for recording accidents and these are routinely shared with the parents. However, the accident records are not always fully completed, for example, they do not always contain the children's full name or the date of the accident.

Children thoroughly enjoy the snacks and meals, which are freshly prepared each day by the cook. The meals are planned to provide a variety of nutritionally balanced foods; they take account of the children's differing dietary requirements and include fresh fruit and vegetables. An abundance of fresh fruit, crackers and butter and jam are provided for the children's snack and they enthusiastically eat as they sit together. The snack time is often a lengthy process where staff serve the children. The timing of this session impacts on the time children have to play and limits their opportunities to eat when they are hungry, to self serve and to develop their independence in this area.

The children enjoy the outdoor play area and regularly benefit from fresh air and exercise. There is a large yard, with a small grassed area and a covered area, which means that children can play outside during inclement weather. Thought has been given to extending the range of experiences the children participate in when they play outside. For example, staff bring out the sand and water, painting, construction and role play. There is ample space to enable children to pedal bikes, while other children show off their 'hoola' skills. Children get the staff to play hide and seek with them and they chase around the yard as they play. Music playing in the yard draws the children to enthusiastically join the dancing, where they rhythmically beat sticks together. Some children take a little time to join the group, observing what to do before feeling confident to take part. Their hand-eye coordination is developing well because they have opportunities to build, complete jigsaws and use tools, such as pencils and cutlery.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in an environment that is safe and secure. Staff work hard to make sure the setting remains welcoming for the children and their parents. The children are safe because staff are vigilant as they support them in their play. They closely supervise the children as they explore inside the setting and when playing outside. The children's arrival and departure at the nursery is monitored by the staff and there is a record of the staff on duty each day. All visitors to the setting sign in and out of the provision. Clear fire safety precautions, such as fire detection

and fire-fighting equipment, are in place and the regular fire evacuation practises help raise the children's awareness of how to deal with emergency situations.

There is a good range of equipment and resources, which are carefully organised at child height to ensure they are safe and easily accessible. Items meet the required safety standards and staff ensure that they remain safe for the children to use because they carry out safety checks each day. The outdoor area is carefully managed to ensure that children's safety is maintained. The staff help children to develop their awareness of their own safety because they continually supervise them, offering gentle reminders. For example, by reminding the children to walk when they are inside the nursery and encourage them to take care when running around the yard.

Children are effectively safeguarded because staff have an awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. There is a designated person for dealing with concerns raised about children in the provision. Suitable monitoring and confidential recording systems ensure that children's welfare is maintained. The policy for child protection is shared with parents and contains all of the required information, including how allegations against a member of the staff team would be dealt with. The clear recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that children are cared for by adults who are suitable to do so.

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

The provision is good.

The children enjoy warm and trusting relationships with the adults who care for them, which helps them to feel comfortable in their surroundings. They are confident and happily seek adult support as needed. The adults work directly with the children throughout the day and provide consistency of care for them.

The younger children are cared for by staff who understand their needs and know them well. They enjoy access to a good range of resources that are age appropriate and stored at their level, which provides them with choice and helps to promote their independence. Staff plan activities for the children and use their observations of what the children can do and are currently interested in. The staff have knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, however, they do not routinely use the aspects of the framework within the planning for the children under three years. Young children like to explore paint and are enthusiastic as they make pictures to take home. They look carefully at the pictures in the books, which are easily accessible, and they thoroughly enjoy sitting with staff to have a simple story read to them.

The older children who attend the before and after school sessions have a designated area in which to play. However, during the inspection these children had little opportunity to play and limited adult input as they wait to go off to school.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The children make progress because staff plan using their knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. All members of the staff team are involved in the planning and good use is made of the observations they complete on the children each day. Plans are clearly linked to the stepping stones and are based around themes and the seasons. In addition, staff use the children's individual play plans to ensure that their individual developmental needs are effectively met. The assessment of the progress children make is recorded in the form of observations and assessments that are linked to the stepping stones.

However, the assessment records indicate what the children are unable to do and therefore give a negative account of their progress. In addition, the tick sheet style record and written assessment provide limited information, which is not backed up by photographic and pictorial evidence.

The children are cared for in two base rooms, which have quiet rooms adjacent for story and singing sessions. The main rooms are organised into bays and children can access the continual provision available. Staff set the tables with planned activities and therefore give children limited opportunities to choose from the array of resources in the setting.

The children come into the nursery, they happily leave their parents and carers, and are soon actively involved in a range of play experiences. They are keen to join staff in activities, such as digging in the sand or making tea in the role play area. They talk freely about their home lives and events, such as birthdays. The children are confident because they have positive relationships with the adults and are beginning to form friendships with the other children. They can accomplish many tasks independently because of the organised working bays and a wide range of resources available. Children show good awareness of their own needs and can manage their own personal hygiene independently because the facilities are easily accessible.

The older and more able children are articulate and engage the adults and their peers in conversation about what they are doing. They talk about the size and shape of the bricks they use to build houses. They engage in a very detailed conversation with staff about the sustainability of the houses that were built by the pigs in the traditional fairy tale. The children use a growing vocabulary to negotiate with their friends and issues relating to sharing equipment are sometimes independently resolved. Group story times are enjoyed by the children and they listen intently to familiar stories told with enthusiasm by the staff. The children's hand-eye coordination is developing because they use a variety of malleable materials and tools, such as play dough, pencils and sand. They use paint brushes and rollers to create patterns on large sheets of paper, both individually and as part of a group activity.

Children accurately and spontaneously use the names of numbers and mathematical language in their play. They are beginning to develop their counting skills and show some awareness of the order of numbers. They talk about shapes as they build and can recognise simple two dimensional shapes, such as a circle and triangle. Children's awareness of the sources of food is extended through activities involving discussions about the properties of animals, such as cows and sheep. The excellent resourcing of the role play fruit shop means that children can compare the texture, smell and colour of real and pretend fruit or vegetables, and they talk enthusiastically about their likes and dislikes. Children's imaginations are successfully fuelled by the ethnic role play area, they dress up in sequined tunics and trousers, and make meals for one another using the cooking pots and utensils.

The children have access to information technology equipment and show great interest in the controls of the laptop used during the inspection. The children have opportunities to explore paint, glue and other media to express their individual creativity. They enjoy collaborating with their friends and the staff on large sheets of paper to make interesting images. Group singing sessions are very popular with the children and they enthusiastically demonstrate they know the words to many simple songs and rhymes. The children are developing physically because they can access the outdoor area regularly.

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

The provision is good.

The children are cared for by a staff team who know them very well. The staff team come from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds and bring a richness of diversity to the setting, which provides children with a wealth of experiences and breadth of knowledge. There is an abundance of multicultural equipment, toys and resources, which are readily available to the children. Staff provide many activities and experiences that help to develop the children's understanding of the local community and the world around them. Children with disabilities and learning difficulties are included in the provision. Monitoring systems are used to highlight any specific needs the children have and professional support is sought to ensure that the children can participate fully in all aspects of the nursery.

Children's behaviour is well managed by the staff. Children are often busy with tasks and the high adult to child ratio means the children are carefully supported as they play. All minor disagreements are dealt with effectively by staff and children are easily distracted to a different task. Positive reinforcement is used to modify the children's behaviour and to raise their awareness of the expectations of the nursery. When children sit well at group time, they are rewarded with taking part in fun activities at singing time. The children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

There partnership with parents and carers is good. There are informative displays in the entrance area and the nursery make sure that the parents know about the provision for their children. For example, there are details of the planning for children's learning and childcare information. The setting's policies and procedures are easily accessible to the parents and there is a clear system to record any concerns raised about the provision. The parents' views are regularly sought through verbal exchanges and formal questionnaires. Any issues raised are dealt with effectively by staff who work hard to meet the needs of the parents. Children and their parents are made very welcome by the staff and easy-going informal discussions ensure that all information relating to the children's changing needs is successfully exchanged each day. The parents receive regular feedback regarding their child's progress. They are encouraged to comment on the progress their child makes because the assessment records are shared and there are routine parental discussion sessions.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The environment is organised to ensure that children can access a wide range of activities each day. The staff team work hard to plan and prepare a variety of experiences to suit the ages and stages of the children who attend the provision. Although, this is not always evident for the older children. The staff are deployed well to ensure there are high adult to child ratios and this means that children are mostly supported as they play. There are clear systems for the recruitment and vetting of staff, which include, seeking references and carrying out Criminal Records Bureau checks to ensure that children are cared for only by staff who are suitable to do so. The setting's employment policy sets out the intention to recruit men as well as women to work in the nursery. As a result, there are a number of men working in the setting, who provide a broader range of role models for the children, which helps to enhance their experiences.

All of the required documentation, such as registers of attendance, accident and medication records are in place. However, these are not always fully completed. There are clear policies and procedures, which are implemented by the staff and as a result, children's well-being is

promoted as a result. Staff development opportunities are planned because there is an appraisal system, which informs training needs and keeps staff up to date with current practice.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. There are three managers who share responsibility for the running of the nursery and the management of the staff. The management support the staff and ensure they have a sound understanding of the National Standards, the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum. The managers work alongside the staff to monitor the care and learning opportunities the children have and this results in the children making good progress in their learning. The managers recognise there are areas for development and understand that the ethos of inclusion, their partnership with parents and carers, and the good quality interactions between the staff and the children ensure there are positive outcomes for the children who attend the nursery.

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 of the quality of care for the children the following actions were raised: for the staff to continue to access relevant training; and for the accident, incident and existing injuries recording to be improved. As a result, the recording systems have improved, however, a further recommendation has been made with regard to the details that are recorded. Staff have attended training and there continues to be a focus on the professional development of all staff in the setting.

At the inspection of nursery education the provision was asked to consider the following: to provide more opportunities for the children to write in the role play area; and for the younger children to recognise and begin to write letter shapes. As a result, children experience opportunities to write purposefully as they play.

### **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 satisfactory. 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):

- ensure that all records kept, such as the attendance registers, accident and medication records, contain the children's full details
- plan and provide activities to help children's development in line with the aspects and approach described in the DfES publication 'Birth to three matters: A framework to support children in their earliest years'
- ensure that the older children who attend the provision before and after school are engaged in suitable age appropriate activities.

### **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):

- develop the assessment records to provide a more positive assessment and evidence of children's progress and learning
- provide more opportunities for the children to be self sufficient and allow them more choices about what they play with and do.

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)