



Stour Centre Crèche

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127651
Inspection date	23 August 2005
Inspector	Jenny Kane
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Registered person	Ashford Borough Council
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of 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.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Stour Centre Crèche was registered in 1991. It is run by Ashford Borough Council and operates from a large room on the first floor of the Stour Sports Centre. The Centre is situated in Ashford town centre and is only used by parents who are using the sports facilities.

A maximum of 21 children may attend the crèche at any one time. A large number of children are registered with the crèche but there is a smaller core of children who attend regularly. No children have special needs and all children speak English.

The crèche opens five days a week throughout the year from 10:00-12:00. Nine staff work with the children and eight hold appropriate early years childcare qualifications.

The group receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a healthy and relaxed atmosphere. Parents take responsibility for changing baby's nappies before leaving their children in the crèche. Suitable first aid equipment is in place and most of the staff hold paediatric first aid certificates. Parents provide all drinks and snacks. Children sit together at snack time and enjoy socialising. As there is no outside play area the staff occasionally take the older children downstairs to join in with tumble tots sessions. This ensures they have the opportunity to use big equipment and enjoy physical play. Children can sleep in a quiet area of the room in their buggy if they are tired. The staff care for a mix of ages and are aware of meeting the needs of babies and toddlers.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a spacious environment where they can move around safely. Staff check all areas before use and have good procedures in place to ensure children's safety at all times. The staff lay the room out depending upon the age of children attending that day. Children benefit from familiar surroundings and this helps them to feel secure. Toys and play equipment are accessible and children help themselves from boxes and tables. However, the children would benefit from the addition of posters, mirrors and displays at a low level, which would make the environment more child-friendly. The children play with toys that are hygienic and safe. Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues which safeguards and protects children in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settle well. They enjoy close relationships with the staff and receive plenty of individual attention. The room is set out well and children move about freely, choosing from the play materials. They approach staff with confidence and ask for help when needed. The routine and activities often depend on the number, ages and abilities of the children in the crèche. Staff have a good understanding of the play needs of young children. However, children would benefit from the provision of more messy and sensory play activities. Staff establish where in the building the parent will be and ensure the child settles before the parent leaves.

Talking to parents and sharing information ensures that staff meet all children's needs and that they have a positive experience.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are secure because regular staff care for them and their parents are always close by and available if there are any problems. Staff treat children in a friendly manner and have good rapport with them. There are good facilities for disabled users and staff have experience of working with special needs children. Parents and staff share information about the children at the beginning and end of the session, which ensures continuity of care. Staff are friendly and have good relationships with parents. Written information, policies and procedures are available but parents would benefit from having access to them.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from well-organised space and activities, which are suitable for the mix of ages attending. High staff ratios ensure staff meet children's individual needs. The certificate of registration is on display, registers maintained and children's records are safe and secure. Several staff have recently gained childcare qualifications and are waiting for their certificates, which they plan to display. They are keen to develop their skills and knowledge further by attending training and workshops. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the group have done a number of things:

A record of accidents, medication, incidents and existing injuries are maintained.

Fire drill procedures and records are in place.

Staff have gained childcare and first aid qualifications.

A number of updated policies are now in place including child protection, lost and uncollected child, equal opportunities, complaints and behaviour management.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report

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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):

- consider ways of making the environment more child friendly by providing displays at child height
- increase children's opportunities for messy and sensory play
- consider ways of further sharing information and policies with parents

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk