

Furness Childcare Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY239993
Inspection date	18 December 2007
Inspector	Sandra Elizabeth Williams
Setting Address	High Street Sawmills, High Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA14 1QY
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Registered person	Furness Childcare Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 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?

Furness Childcare Ltd opened in July 2003. It is situated in the centre of the town of Barrow-in-Furness in Cumbria. The childcare facility consists of a birth-to-two years old room; a two-to-three years old room; a three-to-four years old room; a sleeping room; toilets and changing areas including disabled access; a dining area; a kitchen; an office with a reception area and a staff room with laundry. Children have access to an enclosed outside play area. The facility serves the local area. It is close to amenities such as the town centre shops, parks, playgrounds and schools.

The childcare facility is registered to provide day care for 69 children under eight. There are currently 64 children on roll, 10 of whom, receive funding for nursery education. The setting provides full day care, after school care and holiday play schemes. The facility is open five days a week from 07.30 to 17.30 for 51 weeks of the year. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The facility supports children with learning difficulties. There is one child who speaks English as an additional language.

There are 15 staff working with the children. All but one have child care qualifications. The setting receives support from an advisory teacher.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment where staff implement good hygiene procedures and practices. Children learn the importance of washing their hands before eating their food and after using the toilet. The older children know why they need to do this and understand that it is to get rid of germs. They are developing good levels of independence as they attend to themselves in the bathroom, under staff supervision. The ability of the staff to attend to the children's health and medical requirements is good as their training in first aid is up to date and the first aid kits are well stocked. They also have clear systems in place for recording accidents. Staff follow good hygienic nappy changing procedures to prevent the risk of cross infection. The older children enjoy visits from a local paramedic, who teaches them about first aid and resuscitation.

Children are developing good physical skills as they engage in a range of physical activities which contribute to their good health. The children particularly enjoy playing on the sit and ride toys, developing their physical coordination and sense of space as they pedal around the playground, skilfully avoiding each other. They also enjoy indoor exercises such as curling up in a ball and then jumping as high as they can, like a Jack-in-a-box. Children develop their fine motor skills as they use scissors for cutting out shapes, cutters for making shapes in the salt dough and a range of mark making equipment.

Children begin to learn about healthy eating as the staff provide healthy snacks such as fruit and toast each day. Children are encouraged to develop their independence as they choose from a plate of mixed fruit, which they pass around to each other. The children also enjoy a two course meal each lunch time. The staff have undertaken food hygiene training and the nursery has received a food safety certificate from the council this year. Children's special dietary needs are known to the staff who work closely with the parents to ensure children's needs are met appropriately.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment where their safety is paramount. The children are kept safe and secure by the use of a sophisticated biometric access control system. It allows parents to enter the nursery whenever they wish, but ensures that unauthorised people cannot enter without the permission of staff. The nursery has also installed a nursery cam system. This allows parents to view secure images of their children in the nursery, which reassures them that their children are safe and happy throughout the day.

Most potential hazards are identified and minimised by the use of regular risk assessments, however, there is currently a tripping hazard in one of the play rooms. Children can generally move around safely and play independently. Children are provided with well set out playrooms, which provide ample space for children to easily and safely access the play equipment. This allows them to make choices and develop their independence, as they happily choose to play with the table top games and the creative equipment. Children use good quality equipment,

appropriate to their age and stage of development, which complies with safety standards. Children are protected from harm as the staff regularly check the equipment for any damage or hazards. Equipment is child-sized and play equipment is organised well and at a low-level to ensure that children can access them easily and safely.

Children learn to keep themselves safe because staff explain acceptable boundaries. For example, children know that they must not climb on the furniture or throw toys about the room. The children learn about fire safety as the staff regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedure with them. The staff are watchful and vigilant at all times, ensuring that the children are safe as they play. Children's welfare is promoted as the staff recognise their responsibilities to protect young children from harm. They have a good understanding of potential signs of abuse and neglect, also of who they should contact to report any child protection concerns. They have undertaken child protection training recently. Staff have also reviewed their child protection policy since the last inspection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled, happy and enjoy their time at nursery. They are excited and enthusiastic when they arrive at the nursery and are greeted warmly by the staff. Children are given choices during their time at nursery as they independently choose from the range of activities on offer. Children show an interest in what they do in the setting. They particularly enjoy the craft activities such as making calendars and decorating them with hand prints made of glitter. They also enjoy baking cakes and they take turns to mix the ingredients. All of these activities provide the children with good opportunities to develop their creative and fine motor skills.

Children begin to distinguish between right and wrong because the staff teach them to take turns when playing games. The children learn good manners and respect for others because the staff act as positive role models. For example, when sitting at the table at meal time, the staff encourage the children to say 'please' and 'thank you' as they hand out the food and drinks.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make very good progress because the staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They plan an interesting curriculum which covers all aspects of children's learning. The planning, assessment, observation and recording in relation to the early learning goals and stepping stones are thoroughly recorded. Children's individual learning needs are accurately known, which means that the staff have clear plans to enable individual children to move on to the next step in their learning. Staff set high expectations of what the children can achieve, consequently they receive sufficient challenge.

Children develop good social skills. They are interested and motivated to learn. They are also confident to suggest ideas and speak in a familiar group and also to sit quietly, when appropriate. This is particularly evident during registration and story time. They confidently play in small groups and on their own if they choose. They have formed positive relationships with staff and their peers. Children demonstrate developing self-confidence as they enthusiastically show the inspector their favourite story books. They are developing good self-care skills as they put on their coats and hats before going outside to play.

Children develop good speaking and listening skills as staff regularly engage them in conversations. They enjoy story time and are able to add their interpretation to stories. They are encouraged to recognise their own and their peers' names during registration as they identify name cards. Children are beginning to link sounds to letters, naming and sounding letters of the alphabet. One child spontaneously sings the alphabet song correctly from beginning to end whilst she is happily engrossed in her play. Another child experiments with rhyming words such as pat, mat and cat. However, there is currently no regular opportunities for the children to develop their phonic knowledge, so they are therefore not challenged sufficiently in this area. Children are able to select books from the book corner and are able to handle them carefully and turn the pages in the correct order. They enjoy sitting with the staff reading the books and learning to follow the text from left to right. The children also really enjoy visiting the local library for story time where the library staff apparently comment favourably to the nursery staff about how well behaved the children are. Children have opportunities to develop their writing skills as they are beginning to write their names and other small words.

Children have opportunities to count in everyday activities, such as counting how many children are present at registration. Children are learning to count in English and other languages and can count up to 20 in French. One child can competently count up to 100. Children have opportunities to view numbers to support their number recognition skills and most are confidently able to recognise numerals up to 10. They are also able to recognise shapes. They are learning about sizes and shapes as they identify different shapes in their environment. Children have plenty of opportunities to express themselves creatively through the use of various mediums such as paint, salt dough, sand and water. They also use musical instruments with delight and beat out rhythms to Christmas music. There is ICT equipment available for the older children to use, however, it does not currently get used very often and therefore children do not receive sufficient opportunities to practise their skills in this area.

Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals given their capacity and starting points.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children make a positive contribution and play a full part in the setting as they are warmly welcomed by staff who value and respect their individuality. Children are encouraged to develop positive attitudes about a diverse society through the resources and activities provided by the staff. Resources includes multicultural books, dolls, posters and jigsaws. Children learn about different countries and are learning languages such as Spanish, French, German and Japanese. They also learn about their own community as the staff take them on outings to the wild animal park, the library and swimming pool. With support and guidance children are happy to share, take turns during their play, learn to play cooperatively and develop skills in negotiations. For example, when the children are making Christmas cards and calendars using glitter, they share the equipment and take turns.

Positive behaviour is constantly encouraged by the staff by use of praise and encouragement. These positive approaches foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children with learning difficulties are welcome to join the setting and there is a support system set up if required. Staff have attended appropriate training courses to support children with difficulties and are aware of the importance of working closely with parents and other agencies if required in order to fully support the children's needs.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents find the staff approachable and friendly and children benefit from the positive partnership the staff have with the parents. The staff operate an open door policy and parents become involved in their children's learning by bringing items into the nursery for certain activities. Staff communicate informally with parents on a regular basis about children's welfare and care and they are invited to attend open evenings. There are formal systems for gathering information about the children when they initially join the nursery and for keeping parents informed of children's educational progress and development in the form of written reports at the end of the year.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The organisation of the care is good because staff are qualified and are aware of the need to attend relevant training courses to enable them to keep up to date with current childcare practices. A rigorous procedure is in place in relation to the recruitment of staff. This means that staff employed in this setting are suitable to meet the needs of children.

Children are relaxed and confident in the environment due to the organisation of their care and learning. Children's play opportunities are good as the staff organise the premises well, thus allowing children to move about easily. Documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place. Staff are familiar with the policies and procedures and these are also shared with the parents.

Leadership and management is good. Children's educational needs are well met through the strong leadership and management of the manager. Staff have developed a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The staff have established links with the advisory teacher who visits the nursery each term and assists them in their teaching methods and systems for assessing children.

Children are provided with a varied educational programme. Staff meet regularly to evaluate and monitor the quality of teaching and learning. This means that the staff have an understanding of the setting's strengths and weaknesses.

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 it was requested that the balance and variety of food and drink for the babies be reviewed. The nursery provides babies with a good balance and variety of food and healthy drinks, hence promoting a healthy eating policy. It was also requested that the equal opportunities and child protection policies be reviewed. This has been completed successfully and the policies now include all of the required information.

Complaints since the last inspection

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.

In July 2007 Ofsted received a concern in relation to National Standard 1, Organisation. An inspector visited the provision on 16 July 2007 to investigate the concern. The inspector examined the nursery's policies and procedures regarding the employment of students and the arrangements for their supervision. She also discussed the concern with the registered person.

No action was raised and, as a result of the investigation, Ofsted is satisfied that the provider remains qualified for registration.

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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):

- review the risk assessment to ensure that there are no tripping hazards in the play rooms.

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 the children's play and learning are fully supported by providing them with more accessibility to ICT resources and by increasing their opportunities for linking sounds to letters.

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