

Clowns Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY283274
Inspection date	12 March 2008
Inspector	Susan Riley
Setting Address	Cinder Bank, Ironville, Derbyshire, NG16 5NN
Telephone number	01773 540050
E-mail	
Registered person	Clowns Children Centre (Ironville) Limited
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?

Clowns Children's Centre is one of a group of six day care facilities. It opened in 2004 and operates from a purpose-built building. It is situated in the village of Ironville, Derbyshire and is part of a multi-professional approach to regeneration in the local area. Sure Start offices within the nursery provide local parents and children with access to Health, Social Services and all voluntary children's agencies. A maximum of 75 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 all year round, closing only for main bank holidays. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 45 children under six years on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs nine members of staff. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association and receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is soundly promoted as the setting takes positive steps to promote the children's good health, and encourages them to begin to take responsibility of meeting their own health needs. Children stay healthy because most staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines and the settings own policies and procedures to prevent cross-infection. The children's welfare is promoted because the setting can respond to accidents appropriately as current first aid certificates are held, first aid boxes are kept up to date and readily available and accidents are recorded and shared with parents. Not all staff are fully aware of the medication procedures and of what parents have given their signed consent for, with regard to nappy creams. Appropriate measures are taken when children are ill so that health needs are met.

Children understand and follow simple good health and hygiene practices as they appropriately wash their hands before and after eating, after visiting the bathroom or when they have been involved in messy play. They also clean their teeth after eating. Children are well nourished through the balanced diet that they are offered throughout the day. They benefit from the new healthy diet. Children have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating because the setting provides children with regular drinks and foods that are nutritious and complies with their dietary and religious needs. The children are learning about healthy living through a range of activities that develop the children's understanding of which foods are good for them. All meals are cooked from fresh ingredients. A variety of drinks on offer ensure children do not go thirsty. Staff offer the younger children drinks regularly throughout the day.

Children have access to physical activities and time outdoors due to the staff planning this within the daily routine. Children enjoy their time outdoors and benefit from being in the fresh air. Children engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination as in picking up toys, fixing items together, completing jigsaws and for the older children lots more complex resources are also readily available. Younger children sleep and rest to their own routines. Older children are able to rest and relax in the quiet areas as they require. All children have their health and dietary needs met because staff work well with parents. For example, parents wishes are respected at all times, appropriate written consents are gained and parents are required to fill in detailed forms about their child.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe and are very well cared for in premises that are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. This is because the setting ensures that the environment gives children adequate access to a comprehensive range of facilities that successfully promote children's development. The premises are welcoming and child-centred because they are set up for children prior to them entering. Each child has their own named coat peg and their art work displayed, this helps to give children a sense of belonging to the nursery. Staff greet each child and parent with a smile and a welcome. All areas of the nursery are very clean and appropriate routines are in place to ensure the cleanliness during the day. There is a designated area for children to sleep undisturbed and sleeping children are monitored at all times.

The children always use a wide range of equipment that is suitable and safe. This is because the setting provides furniture, equipment and toys which are appropriate for their purpose. They are of suitable design and condition and are well maintained. The highchairs are fitted with safety harnesses, and each child has their own individual bed linen which is laundered daily. Children can easily access the resources and make their own choices. This helps to promote their independence.

Children's safety is very well promoted because the staff takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings. They ensure proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents and minimises the identified risks to children. The staff complete daily risk assessments for all areas of the nursery both inside and out. The premises are secure and the nursery has effective systems for the safe arrival and collection of children. The premises have a CCTV system in place and all doors have high handles and locking systems to prevent access. There are suitable procedures in place for outings. Parental permission is obtained to transport their children in the nursery vehicle and to take the children out for short walks within the local community.

Children practice the emergency evacuation procedures to raise their awareness of what to do in the event of an emergency. The children are adequately protected from harm because staff have a sound understanding of their role in child protection. They are able to put appropriate procedures into practice. All staff have attended training and are fully aware of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Children are cared for by adults who are vetted and have relevant experience, knowledge and skills. A keyworker is allocated for each child enabling them to bond and feel safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled. They enjoy their time at nursery, and freely select activities according to their needs and interest. Children are confident to approach the staff to ask questions or for help and support. The younger children enjoy close relationships with their carers and readily seek comfort and contact with them, increasing their sense of well-being. Children are confident to use their initiative. For example, when playing outside the children use the place markers to hold their balls still whilst preparing to kick them. Children feel safe and secure and demonstrate a sense of trust. The staff are skilled at encouraging children to extend their experiences, and at listening and talking with them. This raises children's self-esteem and confidence. For example, staff notice the babies enjoy playing in the water whilst hand washing, so they extend this by providing water play at an appropriate level for them.

All children are very involved in their play and learning and demonstrate good levels of concentration. They make their own decisions about their play as they choose from the wide range of activities and experiences. All children increase and develop new skills throughout their play. Children make positive relationships, the staff are very interested in what children do and say. The social skills of children are promoted through the meals times, as children sit together in their small social groups. Staff also promote turn taking and the sharing of resources with the younger children. This helps children build up good relationships with their peers. Children are beginning to distinguish between right and wrong through the gentle reminders and the positive praise they receive from staff.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress and their overall development is promoted because staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Staff recognise that children learn in different ways and plan a full curriculum covering all areas of learning for both in and out of doors. Staff make regular observations of children's learning but do not effectively implement this information into the future planning to move the children on to their next steps of learning. The staff work closely with small groups of children or on a one-to-one basis so that the children benefit from an adult's undivided attention. Children are eager to learn, self-assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. The staff appropriately question and challenge the children and are aware of good teaching practices, to suit the children. They provide activities and opportunities for children to enable them to learn by themselves and consolidate their learning. Children's independence is promoted effectively through the daily routines. For example, children are encouraged to help tidy up at certain times during the day. The play environment is planned to allow children to be self-sufficient. For example, coat hooks are set at children's level, drinks of water are readily available to allow children to obtain a drink as they become thirsty.

Children are interested and motivated to learn. They are busy and keen to get involved, using the resources provided in imaginative ways. Children's independence is promoted. Older children play cooperatively with their friends, negotiating rules for their games and taking turns to use tools and equipment. Children are learning to care for others. For example, staff use a life-sized doll in group time and pretend the doll has hurt its arm and the children are encouraged to give the doll a hug better. Children learn about the wider community through visits to the local shops and by having visitors to the setting to come and talk to them. Recently someone came in and made bird boxes with the children and the boxes are now in the garden, waiting for the birds to nest in them.

Children's communication skills are developing. They are able to listen to others and to take turns in conversations. Children are learning new words and use spoken language to talk about what they have done and intend to do. They learn the sounds that the letters make and staff encourage children to say the initial sound, they also have a letter sound of the week. Children enjoy listening to stories and are able to recall the story when asked questions. They are encouraged to write or make their own marks. Children are beginning to recognise their own names on cards used within the settings. For example, as they self-register themselves as they enter. Children learn from the good labelling about the nursery, helping them to be familiar with words and symbols. They know how books work and handle them with care.

Children are starting to be interested in numbers and counting. They count by rote and are beginning to understand simple addition and subtraction as they sing number rhymes. Children complete jigsaw puzzles, this helps to develop their mathematical ideas and helps them to problem solve for themselves. They use the computer to support their learning as they use a programme that encourages them to match by shape.

Children demonstrate an impulse to explore and investigate. Through the daily routine at registration, the children are encouraged to complete the date and weather board. This helps them to notice the changing weather conditions and the passing of time. Children build with a range of small and large construction sets. They have opportunities to use simple tools and techniques in order for them to understand how items are shaped, assembled and joined. Children confidently use the computer to support their learning and demonstrate good skills as they use the mouse and keyboard to go through the programmes. They are gaining knowledge of their community and the wider world through the excellent provision of a range of resources and activities. These include visits within the local community.

Children move confidently and in safety around the setting. They display a good awareness of personal space for themselves and for others. Children use a range of large and small equipment confidently, with increasing control and coordination. They display increasing skills when using tools in their play, creative and design work. Children demonstrate understanding of good practices with regard to eating and personal hygiene.

Children know their colours and talk about them as they complete a large stick picture. They have daily opportunities to use different media to stick and create their own ideas from a wide range of materials. The children are enthusiastic and enjoy singing and they can sing songs from memory. Children use their imagination when role-playing in the role-play area and imitate adult roles. For example, they take on the roles of the restaurant owner and customer, as they ask what people would like to eat and then cook and serve the food.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are valued and respected as individuals. They are cared for by staff who work very well with parents to meet individual needs and ensure all children are fully included in the nursery. Children benefit most where there is a trusting and mutually supportive partnership. They settle well because staff work closely with parents to ensure they follow their home routines. Systems for sharing information about the children's needs and interests are appropriate. Children gain a sense of belonging as they join in the group time activities, or find their own named coat hook to hang their coat.

Children are being made aware of the wider society through the activities and the excellent resources that the staff provide. For example, activities around the many festivals and celebrations, displays, books and posters around the setting, and the puppets and small world play figures that the children use within their imaginative play. Children can easily access these resources and treat them with respect. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive appropriate and sensitive support. Staff work very closely with parents and other agencies to ensure their needs are fully met.

Children's good behaviour is appropriately fostered by the staffs sensitive intervention and positive reinforcement. For example, positive praise is given to all children and the preschool children receive stickers for 'sitting well and listening' during story time. They are aware of their own needs and starting to be aware of the needs of others. The way staff organise the space and resources helps children to take initiative and develop increasing independence. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit very well from the effective information sharing with parents through newsletters, daily chats and the detailed notice boards. Good detailed information around the Foundation Stage is available for parents and this helps them to be involved in children's learning. All planning is displayed along with the topics. Parents are kept very well informed about their child's progress and achievements through regular parents' evenings and termly reports. The nursery values and actively seeks parent's views and ideas, through questionnaires and the suggestion box.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a very well-organised environment. Staff know their roles and responsibilities and effectively implement routines to give children a broad range of experiences. The rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with sound knowledge and understanding of child development. Suitable procedures are in place to protect children from unvetted visitors to the setting. Correct staff ratios are maintained at all times which supports children's care, learning and play. Children are appropriately grouped and they benefit from well-deployed staff, who consistently interact with them and give them effective support and encouragement. This helps children to feel secure and confident. Staff regularly attend training to increase their knowledge and understanding of child development or to keep themselves up to date with current issues.

Appropriate cover arrangements are in place to ensure that suitable and additional staff are employed as required. Records are available and retained for inspection, they are suitably organised and kept in a confidential manner. All policies and procedures protect children sufficiently and are effectively implemented to promote all the outcomes for children. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management for nursery education is good. The owners and manager have developed sound aims and values for the provision and they have a clear vision for staff continuing improvements for children's care and education. They are well aware of the strengths and weaknesses for children's education and what is required for improvement. Excellent training opportunities ensure that children are well-protected and cared for. Staff effectively monitor and evaluate children's learning. The staff team work very well together and are good role models for children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery agreed to ensure the risk assessments contained more detail. New forms have been devised and these contain sufficient detail to fully protect children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted received a complaint which raised concerns about staff to child ratios, supervision, food provision and communication with parents. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to the provision to consider these concerns in relation to National Standards 2: Organisation, 6: Safety, 8: Food and drink, and 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers. As a result of the visit the provider was given the following action: ensure children are provided with food which is prepared to ensure their nutritional needs are met. Ofsted received an appropriate response from the provider and they remain qualified for registration.

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.

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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 all staff are aware of the procedures for medication.

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 further the use of the observations and assessments of children to effectively plan for the next steps in their development and learning. (this also applies to care)

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