



Longshaw Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY272648
Inspection date	07 September 2005
Inspector	Michael, David Charnley
Setting Address	Crosby Road, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB2 3NF
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Registered person	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Longshaw Nursery School first opened in 1954 and has recently extended the building to offer care for children aged under three years. The facility was registered as a Children's Centre in May 2005 under the Blackburn with Darwen Borough council. It operates from a single storey building close to the centre of Blackburn and serves the local area. The group opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08:00 to 18:00 and children attend for a variety of sessions. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are a total number of 86 children on roll aged between 0 to 5 years. Of these,

61 receive funding for nursery education. The centre supports children with special educational needs and also those who speak English as an additional language.

There are 16 staff employed at the centre. 11 of the staff, including the Child Care Manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are working towards a relevant qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well, with regular opportunities to engage in physical activities indoors and outdoors. They learn to manoeuvre in a variety of different ways such as bending, crouching and balancing during outdoor play, and therefore develop their physical skills appropriately. The health of babies and toddlers is well promoted as staff pay good attention to following their routines for sleep or rest. Children are learning to recognise their needs for drink following physical exertion. They show their ability to be independent as they pour their own drink of water. Children benefit from the good range of nutritious foods available including generous portions of fruit and vegetables. All food is freshly prepared with menus planned in advance that take into account children's dietary needs and preferences. Meal times are a good social occasion where children talk about home life and the type of foods that they enjoy eating. Children are beginning to learn about what constitutes a healthy diet.

Children learn about good hygiene routines, consistently washing their hands at the appropriate intervals. Visits from people in the health profession, such as the dental nurse, widen children's awareness of hygiene as they talk about the importance of brushing their teeth at regular intervals and the effects of eating sweet foods. Children are protected from infection by the staff's good attention to cleanliness and hygiene, such as when changing nappies. When children are unwell, consents, policies and procedures are effective in ensuring continuity of care between home and nursery, through good communication and appropriate action. When accidents occur children receive good care as most staff hold relevant first aid qualifications.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play, eat and rest in a safe and 'child focused' environment. They enjoy their learning experiences as a result of staff's dedication to ensuring that the provision is welcoming for children and parents alike. The bright and visually stimulating environment captures children's interests. Children benefit greatly from the use of an excellent range of safe, good quality, developmentally appropriate equipment and resources. The high quality equipment available, including the excellent outdoor play provision, promotes children's development in all areas.

The premises are safe and secure throughout with the relevant safety features

strategically positioned by staff, therefore allowing for children's freedom of movement. Children are carefully protected from hazards since staff regularly carry out risk assessments and take prompt action where necessary in line with policy and procedure. They learn to manage their own safety. Staff talk to them about potential hazards, such as what could happen if climbing on chairs or the risk of accidents happening if they run about within a specified play area. Children are kept safe in the event of fire or emergency, due to good procedures for evacuation. They are kept secure on the premises as the main exits are kept locked and staff monitor access closely.

Children are protected by the staff's good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and the implementation of good procedures in place for dealing with any concerns identified.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children engage well and are motivated in their play because staff plan an interesting programme of activities that covers many aspects of learning. Children express themselves well with confidence and develop their ideas during creative activity that includes music and dance, collage work and sensory play. Children experience lots of fun in the well resourced outdoor play provision. Younger children develop their physical skills as they manoeuvre wheelie toys around with great gusto, play catching and throwing games with different sized balls, and learn to balance along beams. Children enjoy experimenting with different mark making materials that include the use of glue sticks, pens and paintbrushes. They show good levels of sustained interest during planned activity with staff on hand to support and guide them.

Staff's growing knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework is having a positive impact on improving younger children's achievements. They show an awareness of the range of experiences that enables young children to make greater use of their senses and creative abilities. Exploration with textured and natural materials including paint, dough and fabrics helps children represent their experiences, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways.

The ability to make choices and decisions about their play is fostered appropriately as children alternate from one activity area to another with confidence. They develop good social skills as they engage in simple conversation during their play, openly referring to their families and comparing their experiences. Staff listen, value what children say and talk about what they are doing in their play, for example during messy play. The good interaction of staff helps raise children's self-confidence and self-esteem as they are encouraged to communicate their ideas. Positive relationships with staff are therefore formed, with children being happy and settled in their company. The good attention to planning and effective means of observing children's achievements contributes to them making steady progress within the setting. Staff endeavour to help all children reach their full potential by enhancing existing skills and building on any weakness areas. This is an area that continues to be reviewed and developed.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children from all backgrounds are made to feel very welcome at the setting. The well planned 'settling in' procedures and documentation helps children develop a sense of community within their own group and within the setting as a whole. Staff ensure the atmosphere is happy and relaxed at all times. Children, as a result develop good relationships with staff, find them approachable and responsive to their needs.

Staff ensure that the resources and activities positively represent the children who attend as well as individuals from the wider community. Visits from people who work in the community help develop children's understanding of the roles they play in society, for example, policeman and the dentist. Planned activities that raise children's awareness of the wider world involve sampling foods from other countries, learning about Chinese writing, however the range on offer is not fully extended to other cultures and therefore hinders children's understanding in this area.

Children are learning to understand what is meant by responsible behaviour, such as sitting and listening whilst others speak. The importance of being kind, helpful and considerate towards one another during play is emphasised by the positive role modelling of staff. Children behave well with staff adopting good strategies for promoting positive behaviour. This involves prompting good manners, giving praise for their achievements which helps to boost their self-confidence and self-esteem.

Effective working relationships with parents, that involves the regular exchange of information, results in a good understanding of children's needs. Parents provide staff with all the information required in order for them to be in a position to provide appropriate care. Parents are kept well informed of the activities taking place within the setting and are invited to attend meetings about their children. The progress being made by individual children is conveyed to parents via the key worker system and efforts are being made by the setting to involve parents more in the assessment process. Parents speak very highly of the setting and are appreciative of the staff and the levels of support they dedicate to their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

A well organised staff team plan a good quality activity programme based on the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and the Birth to three matters framework, therefore providing all children attending the setting with continued levels of stimulus to support their learning. Children enjoy their experiences because staff are good natured and give good attention to them, ensuring they have fun through their play. Staff assume their roles well which serves to ensure children are appropriately cared for in the setting. There are good systems for recording and monitoring children's progress via the key worker system. Regular team meetings are a good avenue for sharing information about children's varying needs, therefore contributing to promoting their welfare. Good staff induction and appraisal systems are in place. Children benefit from the setting's strong commitment to improving and

developing the service.

Space and resources are organised effectively, which in turn allows children to engage in various aspects of play in a comfortable and relaxed environment. Children take great delight in moving from one area to another of their own free will, therefore contributing to their growing independence. The required documentation is well organised, up-to-date and stored in confidence. This contributes to the safe and efficient management of the provision. Staff implement the setting's policies and procedures to good effect. Overall, the nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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

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 develop systems for observing what children do and use these observations to plan the next steps for children's play, learning and development
- widen the range of opportunities for children to learn about the world around them

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