

Moat House Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY290703
Inspection date	17 October 2007
Inspector	Karen Eunice Millerchip
Setting Address	Moat House Primary School, Deedmore Road, Coventry, West Midlands, CV2 1EQ
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Registered person	Coventry City Council
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 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?

Moat House Early Years Centre is a neighbourhood nursery. It opened in 2004 and operates from a self-contained unit within a primary school. It is situated in the Wood End area of Coventry. A maximum of 45 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:00 to 19:00 all year round. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 47 children from six months to under eight years on roll. Seven children receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs eleven staff on a full and part-time basis. All of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children delight in the freedom of playing in the outdoor area. They laugh as they run up and down the pathways and staff chase them. They develop skills in climbing and balancing as well as learning to control wheeled toys as they push, pull and pedal. The range of resources for outdoor play is wide and older children concentrate hard as they learn to manoeuvre planks and crates to help develop an obstacle course. Children have a good balance of natural and man-made resources to encourage exploring and investigating. Babies and very young children also enjoy the outdoor area with good support and guidance from staff, this positively contributes to their health and well-being. Indoors, children use a wide variety of tools and equipment as they play in the sand, water, play dough and graphics area with developing control and precision.

Children stay healthy and are protected from infection because staff follow clear health and hygiene procedures. For example, disposable gloves and aprons are always used while changing nappies and separate aprons used when serving food. Children learn about good hygiene from the routines in place which encourage them to wash their hands before eating and after toileting. The picture guides next to the wash basins make this process inviting. Children are protected in the case of an accident as all staff are first aid trained and all accidents are recorded carefully and parents sign the record. The procedure for administration of medication is equally strong which ensures parents are kept fully informed of these aspects of their child's care.

Children thoroughly enjoy the meals and snacks provided, all of which are cooked and prepared on the premises. Menus are varied and take account of children's nutritional needs. Mealtimes are a sociable occasion and staff eat with the children to encourage and support self-help skills. However, the area used at mealtimes for children under two, is small and in a busy area of the room which lessens the enjoyment for these children. They are well hydrated because drinking water is provided for older children to access freely and younger children are encouraged to drink regularly. Any special dietary needs children may have, are recorded before care begins and this information is transferred to the kitchen and the playrooms to ensure children's dietary needs are met at all times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in bright, attractive premises. The purpose-built accommodation meets all children's needs and provides safe areas for all aspects of care. Children benefit from a well equipped, secure outdoor play area, well resourced play rooms and a sensory room. In addition, there are staff facilities, offices, meeting rooms and laundry.

Children benefit from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment. For example, attractive low-level tables and chairs are provided in all rooms which are appropriate and safe for the children who use that area. Older children are able to access the toys and resources independently and are encouraged to tidy them away after use. All the resources are checked regularly for safety and staff ensure that any new resources are safe, suitable and meet all the appropriate safety standards.

Clear risk assessments have been carried out and are reviewed regularly. Staff follow clear procedures to check the safety of the premises both inside and outdoors to promote children's welfare. Children learn to keep themselves safe because staff discuss road safety during role play in the garden using traffic cones and traffic lights, they learn about safe handling of utensils when serving meals and to abide by group rules to keep each other safe.

Fire safety is generally well addressed, the premises are fitted with appropriate smoke detection and firefighting equipment and most staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities should an emergency occur. Fire drills are practised, recorded and evaluated to keep children safe. However, the frequency of the drills means that not all staff or children have had the opportunity to practise these procedures, which potentially compromises children's welfare in the event of a fire.

Children are well protected because there is a clear safeguarding children's procedure in place. Staff have regular training in child protection and are clear that the welfare of the child is their first priority in such situations.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Young children make progress and enjoy their time at the nursery because staff are sensitive to their individual needs and have made good relationships with them. In the baby room staff chat to and play with the babies. They show children the books they have made from photographs of the babies taking part in different activities and the children delight in recognising themselves. Even very young children have regular opportunities to experiment and take part in messy play activities, discovering the different properties of chocolate crispies, sand, water and dough as they play, feeling the texture and on occasions tasting it.

Older children are beginning to experiment with mark making and creativity. Staff value their efforts, making attractive displays of the children's own work. Staff are skilled at enabling children to achieve and they encourage children's independence by giving them time to talk and listening to them.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have an understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan interesting learning opportunities to progress children along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Staff have developed good systems to monitor and assess children's progress and to plan activities to help them take the next step in their learning. This work is seen as important and staff are given time within the setting to enable them to do this. All staff contribute to the weekly planning and this enables all key workers to ensure activities meet the needs of their key children. Weekly evaluation of activities and progress helps to monitor the effectiveness of the nursery education. Staff are skilled at valuing children's contribution to the setting and they encourage the children to take an active role in, for example, drawing a large picture of 'mummy owl' which links to the theme of the week. The children's drawings are then displayed developing a sense of pride in their work.

Most children settle well into the group and less confident children readily separate from their carers with good staff support. They are eager to take part in the activities and be fully involved in the daily life of the setting. They show curiosity and explore how things work. They contribute well at circle times and are learning to listen when appropriate. They have developed good

relationships with staff and have made strong friendships within the group. Children thoroughly enjoy books and stories and will eagerly ask for favourite stories to be read, often joining in with familiar phrases. They have opportunities to use different media to practise early writing skills such as, painting, 'corn flour gloop', shaving foam, chalks and pencils. Children are being introduced to songs and action rhymes but there are few opportunities planned for music and movement or recognising rhythm or sounds which means children do not have chance to practise and develop these skills.

Children are learning to solve problems as they build with a variety of different construction sets and junk modelling. They learn to recognise shape as they cut in the graphics area and play shape recognition games. They count during adult-led activities such as circle time, but spontaneous experiences are not seized which does not fully maximise their learning in this area. Children learn about volume as they play in the sand, water and help to pour their own drinks. Children benefit from free access to painting, collage and drawing activities. They enthusiastically create pictures on their own and in groups which are well displayed around the setting. They enjoy role play in the shop, kitchen or hospital where they have various writing materials to encourage mark-making. Children are learning to use information and communication technology, developing skill with the mouse and the keyboard as they use the computer, calculators and mobile phones.

Organisation of space and resources is very good. Children confidently access the resources and move around the setting from area to area. Staff work very well together as a team and provide a happy, relaxed environment where children are able to make good progress in their nursery education.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have their individual needs met because staff work closely with parents both before care begins and once children have started at the nursery. Staff show care and respect to the children and their parents at all times and have regard to the detailed and clear equal opportunities policy which is in place in the nursery. Children learn about the wider world from the good range of resources provided by the nursery and children's art work, which show positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. Children gain an understanding of the wider environment through visits from people who work in the community such as, an artist from the local gallery who helped develop the outdoor play area and visits to a forest school at a local wildlife sanctuary. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children attending who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported. Key staff have developed strong links with other professionals to access support and advice when appropriate. They work closely with parents and other professionals to meet children's individual needs. Staff know the children well and ensure all children are included in the activities and daily routines of the setting. Behaviour throughout the setting is good. Children are learning the difference between right and wrong from the good role models provided by the staff, who are enthusiastic, kind and polite. Staff use praise and reward very well and the same rules apply throughout the nursery and this approach ensures there is consistency in all rooms and children understand the expectations when they move from room to room. Staff encourage children to be kind and explain why a particular behaviour is not acceptable. Children are gently reminded of group rules and are encouraged to say 'please' and 'thank you'.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. All parents of children who attend the nursery receive clear and detailed initial written information about the setting and this includes the main policies and procedures of the setting as well as brief details of the curriculum. Information about each child is recorded in the child profile form which is completed jointly by parents and key workers so that staff are aware of any special needs, likes, dislikes or fears a child may have. Parents are able to access their child's developmental records at any time and are encouraged to attend the family learning days when they can take part in the activities of the nursery and have time to talk to their child's key worker about their achievements. Topic sheets are distributed to keep parents informed of themes within the room, a feedback sheet is provided to enable parents to share any views. However, parents are not given ideas on how to extend their child's learning into the home and this limits their learning. A wealth of information is displayed for parents, including annotated photographs of their children taking part in activities linked to the six areas of learning. This keeps them in touch with how their children learn and the daily life of the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are protected by the clear and detailed recruitment, vetting and induction procedures, which are in place and ensure that children are cared for by staff who have the appropriate training and experience to meet children's needs. Staff training needs are clearly identified and monitored to ensure they are up to date with new initiatives in the early years field. Staff ratios are maintained carefully. All the necessary documentation is kept in an efficient and appropriate manner. Policies and procedures are updated regularly and are easily accessible to both parents and staff.

Children have their needs met because there is a key worker system in operation throughout the nursery which enables children to have a stable carer on a day to day basis. The key worker is mainly responsible for liaison with parents and for children's developmental assessments, thereby promoting consistency of care for children.

Leadership and management are good. Staff work together as a supportive team and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. The majority of staff have a Level 3 qualification and further training is identified through staff meetings and appraisals. The line manager within the centre takes an active role and interest in the nursery and ensures any staffing, training or resource issues are dealt with efficiently and promptly. Strong support from the centre teacher enables staff to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education and to ensure all children make sound progress in their learning. Each member of staff takes responsibility for planning an activity within a specific area of learning to continuously improve their knowledge and practice. They effectively evaluate their own practice and develop action plans to improve services for the children. Staff show a strong commitment to improve and work closely with the children's centre teacher and advisory teachers, actively implementing any advice given. This ensures children's development is well promoted. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was required to conduct a risk assessment of the premises identifying action to be taken to minimise identified risks and to ensure that information given to parents regarding policies and medicine procedures sufficiently informs them.

Risk assessments are now in place and reviewed regularly. Staff are familiar with the risk assessments and follow them during daily practice. All records and documentation are maintained accurately and provide full details of procedures followed during the day-to-day running of the setting and whilst caring for children.

Complaints since the last inspection

In November 2005 Ofsted received information relating to national standard 2 (Organisation) suggesting that staff:child ratios did not meet the minimum requirements during the early part of the mornings. Ofsted investigated by an unannounced inspection and found that the minimum staff:child ratios were not met in one room during the early part of the morning. Ofsted issued the provider with a Notice of Failure to Comply in respect of these findings, requiring the provider to submit details of how minimum staff:child ratios will be met at all times. The provider has responded in writing outlining an action plan and contingency arrangements to meet this requirement at all times. Ofsted will review how this has been implemented at the next inspection. The provider remains 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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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 space used at mealtimes
- review the frequency of fire drills.

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):

- maximise learning opportunities in spontaneous and everyday activities with specific regard to mathematical development
- develop planning to incorporate all aspects of music and movement
- develop ways in which parents are informed about how learning can be extended into the home.

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