

Explore Learning

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY275232
Inspection date	30 October 2007
Inspector	Susan Esther Harvey
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Registered person	Explore Learning Ltd
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Out of School 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Explore Learning opened in 2003 and offers computer based tutoring at out of school sessions. It operates from a purpose built setting within a large shop at Emersons Green in Bristol. The group serves the local area. A maximum of 30 children may attend the group at any one time. The group opens seven days a week all year round. Sessions are Monday to Friday 15:00 to 20:00, Saturday 10:00 to 18:00 and Sunday 10:30 to 16:30 term time, and Monday and Tuesday 12.00 to 20.00 and Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 10:00 to 18:00, during school holidays.

There are currently 123 children from five to eight years on roll. The group can support children with learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group employs three full-time members of staff who hold appropriate qualifications. The group also employs 15 part-time staff members, all who have appropriate experience in the care of children and computer skills, several have a recognised qualification at graduate level.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are independent in their self-care skills. Staff offer gentle reminders to wash their hands after using the toilet. However, the toilet used by the children lacks due care and attention and insufficient hand washing resources are not regularly available. Therefore, this increases the risk of the spread of infection. The setting has written policies which promote appropriate hygiene practices. For example, there is a clear policy provided on children not attending when they are unwell. Children's medical needs are well known to staff. There are staff with appropriate first aid qualifications on site at all times, and parents have provided written consent to seek emergency medical treatment or advice where needed. Accident records remain confidential. However, details of how staff should complete the accident record is part of their accident policy, but this is not followed through in practice and limited information is often recorded.

Children can access water at any time during the session and are aware that drinks are not to be taken to the computer area. Snacks are not given and children do not have access to outside play. This has little affect on the children as they attend for a limited period only for each session.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The environment is bright and welcoming for children. Their art work is attractively displayed on the wall of the 'Surf Club'; an area set aside for children to relax after working on their computer programmes. The area is well laid out and children are able to move freely and safely between the tables and chairs. Full risk assessments are in place and staff complete daily checks to ensure that the resources, equipment and furniture are safe and in good working order. The computers are regularly checked to ensure they are suitable for children to use. As well as the computers, children are able to choose from a range of resources which they can use in the 'Surf Club'. These include board games, jigsaw puzzles, a good selection of books, pencils and paper.

Staff are vigilant in ensuring the safety of the children in their care. They make sure that children's time in the sessions are recorded accurately and they are returned to the correct adult on collection. The gate to the room is operated by staff, so that the area is secure at all times. The emergency evacuation plan is clearly displayed within the room and all staff are aware of the procedures to evacuate the premises. Children take part in regular evacuation practises. As a result, are learning to keep themselves safe and are able to leave the premises safely and efficiently.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues. They are fully aware of their personal responsibility to safeguard children. Policies and procedures are in place for the safe and effective protection of children. This includes lost or uncollected children, child protection statement and incident book. As a result, children's well-being is actively promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the room confidently and happy, they are eager to attend the setting. There are good relationships visible between staff and children. For example, staff take time to give the children individual attention while completing their programmes. Children confidently ask for help and are relaxed about the tasks they are set. Staff talk with the children about things they may have done at home and what interests them. Staff ensure that the computer programmes are at an appropriate level for each child. Quality time is spent on the initial introduction for parents and the children. This ensures that staff have fully assessed the children's abilities. As a result, the process ensures the correct assigning of programmes to meet the children's needs. The level of difficulty is increased as the children complete tasks in mathematics, reading, writing and spelling, and children take responsibility for their own learning. Therefore, children can work at their own pace without any pressure.

Children are cared for as individuals with different needs. They are well supported in trying out new activities. Less confident children benefit from the clear explanations by staff. As a result, children's confidence in themselves and their abilities is promoted. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement from the staff. For example, children receive a certificate after public recognition from the other children when they have reached their personal goal. Children complete challenges on the computers. For each challenge they move their names around an ACE board, which means ask for help, concentration and effort. This is designed to ensure that all children are recognised for their achievements. In discussion with the children they speak highly of the staff and the progress they make completing their learning aims in maths and English.

After completing their programmes children have the opportunity to talk and spend time together in the 'Surf Club' rest area where they crayon pictures, play fun computer games or look at books. As a result, children are given time to relax and socialise with friends before leaving the setting, and a balance of concentrated learning and relaxation is met.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff have detailed information about each child's ability before starting on the programmes. Children are provided with a tutor and work in groups of six. An equal opportunities policy is in place and children are treated with concern where all have equal access to all the equipment. Staff ensure that children access resources which reflect diversity in the community such as books, computer programmes that cover different cultures and a quiz on world religions.

Staff members are aware of any additional requirement that a child may have and take positive and considered steps to enable children to fully participate in activities. Additional resources are in place such as, a larger mouse, magnifiers, colour screens and overlays which assist children with dyslexia.

Children behave very well and respond positively to requests made by staff. The clear code of conduct, which is shared with parents, supports the good policies that are designed to help children manage their own behaviour. Children work well with each other, they cooperate while sitting together helping with the programme when asked. Children gain from the support given by staff members. They are good role models, polite to the children and treat them with respect.

The staff members build a good working relationships with parents. They work in partnership with parents and carers to meet the needs of children. Information is shared and parents feel fully informed and involved. New parents are given quality time by the manager who listens to their questions, she discusses their child's assessment and what programme is planned for the child.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. All the required documentation is in place and the registration document is on public display. The space is well organised to meet the needs of the children attending the sessions. Staff are well deployed to allow all children to receive quality time with their tutor. Children are well occupied and involved in the computer programme activities on offer. Children gain from the efficient registration system in place, so ensuring their safety.

Staff are qualified and experienced in the specialist field of teaching maths and English skills to children through computer programmes. There is a rigorous recruitment and induction process in place which ensures that children are cared for by appropriate staff members.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure that fire evacuation is practised and recorded as appropriate. There have been several emergency evacuation drills since the last inspection which have been appropriately recorded. As a result, the action taken by the provider has improved children's safety.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints from parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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 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 the toilet is kept clean and appropriate hand washing equipment is provided in order to prevent the spread of infection

- ensure a record of accidents includes the children's full details and parents signature

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