

Sherwood Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY277167
Inspection date	12 August 2008
Inspector	Angela Hufton
Setting Address	Bilsthorpe Centre, Crompton View School Site, Crompton Road, Bilsthorpe, Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG22 8PS
Telephone number	01623 629203
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Registered person	Sherwood Children's Centre
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Sessional 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?

The Sherwood Children's Centre opened in January 2004 and was renamed in 2007. It is one of three centres operated by Sherwood Children's Centre. The provision is registered to provide 20 places and accepts children up to 8 years. The provision is organised to support parents and carers who attend the Sure Start training programmes. The provisions also provide 'transition to nursery' and play sessions. These run either morning or afternoon, within school times and places are booked in advance. It operates from the Centre in Compton View Primary School, Compton Road in the village of Bilsthorpe. The provision have access to a main activity room, with partitioned areas, kitchenette, quiet room, office and toilets. There is an enclosed covered outdoor area with grass and safety surfacing.

There are currently 198 children on roll, aged from two months. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children attend from Clipstone, Bilsthorpe and Blidworth.

The provision employs a number of staff. All supervisors hold relevant qualifications for their posts. Other staff have or are working towards relevant and higher qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted well by staff who effectively follow the provision's comprehensive health and hygiene procedures. For example, babies have their nappies changed immediately they need this and staff follow good procedures, including wearing aprons and gloves, to prevent cross-infection. Children learn the importance of good hygiene to promote their health through clear explanations and support from staff. They begin to understand why they need to wash their hands properly before eating. Minor accidents to children are calmly dealt with such as a football catching their nose so children receive appropriate treatment and reassurance. Children are protected from illness because a detailed policy is shared with parents to exclude children who are contagious or infectious.

Children's individual dietary needs are met effectively by staff and parents sharing information. All children gain a good understanding of healthy eating through topics and discussion. They particularly enjoyed a recent session looking at different foods where they were able to express opinions through the effective use of 'lollipop type' sad and happy faces. All children enjoy a variety of nutritious snacks including fresh fruit and express delight as they enjoy a tuna and pasta meal from the community café asking not just for seconds but for further helpings. Children are provided with regular drinks and babies are supported well when having a bottle. Older children begin to recognise their own thirst needs as they freely help themselves after energetically having a game of football.

Children have good opportunities to take part in a broad range of challenging and energetic physical activities that contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Through effective planning, use of indoor and outdoor play areas and good resources, children have fun whilst developing their large muscle skills and hand to eye co-ordination. Very young children enjoy these opportunities to explore outdoors including when raining and delight in splashing in the water trough. Children are able to rest or sleep according to their individual needs. Staff are very aware to monitor babies and respond immediately they show they are tired and need to sleep.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well-maintained, welcoming environment which is safe and secure. The risk of accidental injury to children is minimised through staff's well-organised checking routines, the active supervision of children and effective use of risk assessments. Where hazards are identified such as a leaking canopy roof staff take interim measures to minimise the risk to children, imaginatively turning this into a learning activity. Children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised as staff are vigilant and only release children to authorised adults.

Children use a wide range of clean, stimulating and developmentally appropriate toys and equipment. They develop their independence as they move freely and safely around the room because activities are set out so that clear walkways are maintained. Dry rice used in play activities is quickly cleaned up when it is accidentally spilt and staff explain to children this is so they do not slip and hurt themselves. This supports children's understanding of safety. Whilst fire practices are carried out for the overall centre, these are not specifically planned for the crèche sessions to fully ensure that parents and children understand the different procedures

to ensure their safety. However, staff are aware and have considered adaptations in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Children are well protected in the event of child protection concerns. All staff have attended relevant training and have a good awareness of possible signs to take note of, with all staff confident to put procedures in place should they have concerns about the welfare of a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children arrive confidently at the setting and soon settle to play with their friends. Staff are highly effective in supporting a baby coming for their first time. This means they quickly join in with others and develop the confidence to take part in the learning opportunities provided. Children access a wealth of exciting activities and resources that they use to explore and create such as learning to spin paint to create patterns. These learning activities are exceptionally planned to offer targeted opportunities for children to use their imagination in role play situations, dressing up as a chicken or develop concentration as they sit and enjoy stories and linked activities. Staff are highly effective in working closely with the children, helping them to extend their ideas and taking an interest in their achievements. This helps to build children's self-esteem and supports them to maximise their learning.

Children rapidly acquire new knowledge and skills as they learn through the targeted and planned practical play experiences and also because staff deploy themselves well to support and extend children's learning by using questions to encourage their thinking. Staff are extremely knowledgeable and highly effective in using the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum to benefit children's learning. Comprehensive observation and assessment linked to the framework is expertly used to clearly identify each child's next steps. All children are confident, enthusiastic and motivated to learn. They concentrate very well as activities are planned to take good account of their varying interests. This means children learn whilst having fun, for example, children enthusiastically dance whilst waving ribbons, express delight as they play with natural materials in a treasure basket and demonstrate good language skills as they talk to a member of staff about how they are mending things with their tool set. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities which promotes choice and independence and staff are very skilled in following a child's lead to develop their learning such as when they sit together to make play dough. Detailed transition arrangements as children move on to school ensures their continued progress is fully supported. Testimony from the schools praises the highly effective start the children have received in the setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children feel a sense of belonging and all take an active part in the provision. Staff know the children extremely well and raise their self-esteem by cherishing them as individuals. Children develop a positive attitude and respect for others through the staff being very good role models. All children increase their awareness of their own and differing cultures through planned activities and accessing resources that show positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. For example, staff are supporting children to use sign language with favourite rhymes such as 'wind the bobbin up'. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in the setting; staff work extremely closely with parents and others to promote each child's development. This includes staff attending specific training, taking in-depth information

from parents and making very specific settling-in arrangements, whilst also taking full account of the needs of the children already attending.

Children behave very well. They have a routine that is familiar to them and they know what to expect and what is going to happen next. Staff keep children very well informed of what they will be doing so that children can experience excitement and fulfilment. Children are happy and occupied and play harmoniously as a group. They respond very well to staff and are helpful and considerate.

Children benefit because the partnership with parents is extremely good and highly effective in supporting each child to achieve their full potential. Staff ensure that parents have access to their child's records and they can contribute to their child's learning if they wish. This is further enhanced by involvement in the 'Little Learners at Home' activity packs that provide parents with all the materials and some ideas to develop their child's learning at home. Parents take an active role in this and freely express their praise and how they have enjoyed using the camera or making play dough with their child. Staff keep parents extremely well informed by sending regular newsletters home, making the operational plan of the setting available, and also providing parents with a comprehensive pack of information.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the provision's comprehensive policies, procedures and efficient organisation which support everyday practice well. The setting has clear aims and objectives, underpinned by a detailed operational plan that is available to inform parents. Effective recruitment and vetting procedures, ongoing staff meetings and training ensure that children are well protected and are cared for by staff who are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and clear about their individual roles. This results in a happy, committed staff team who work very well together under the strong leadership of the manager.

Children benefit from the effective deployment of staff who have warm, friendly relationships with them. This, together with good levels of staff working directly with the children, allows all children to feel secure and develop a strong sense of their own self-worth. The effectiveness of what the staff and children do is regularly reviewed and improvements identified. For example, staff are developing the opportunities for children to move freely between inside and out and are looking at ways to manage the temperature for young babies. Children stay safe as any visitors are closely monitored. Confidentiality takes high priority and records are stored in an appropriate manner. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting agreed to one recommendation to improve the care offered to children. This was to continue to develop policies and records such as the child protection policy whilst also ensuring these policies are effectively shared with parents. The setting has a clear system to review all policies, procedures and records to ensure these meet the latest requirements. For example, the child protection policy has been revised again recently to reflect the changes to 'safeguarding' and a comprehensive and coherent policy has all the latest guidance and information to inform practice and effectively protect children. The setting has

produced a comprehensive summary of all relevant policies to ensure these are easily accessible to parents further promoting the welfare of the children.

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 made by parents, which they can see on request. The 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 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 risk assessments including the fire evacuation procedures to ensure all users of the provision are aware of the procedures to follow for the different types of sessions provided.

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