

Sunshine Under Fives Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	305351
Inspection date	08/07/2009
Inspector	Suzette Butcher
Setting address	Percival Road, The Dale, Chester, Cheshire, CH2 4AH
Telephone number	01244 650 722
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Description of the setting

Sunshine Under Fives Centre opened in 1986 and operates from two main rooms in an accessible single story building located on the Dale Army Camp in Moston, Chester. It is run as a registered charity and managed by a committee of army personnel, staff and civilians. The setting is open each weekday during term time only, from 09.30 until 12.30. Children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 54 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 52 children aged from one to four years on roll. The setting provides funded early education for three and four year olds. Children attend from military families based at the Dale Camp and from the local community. The centre supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are nine members of staff employed. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and four are working towards a qualification. The setting is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate. Management has the capacity to improve because key areas for development are identified. Ofsted has not been informed of significant changes to the management structure. Children are adequately protected but important policies are not reviewed to ensure they meet the welfare requirements. Staff's limited knowledge and understanding of the EYFS has a negative impact on children's learning and development. The uniqueness of each child, family and community is valued and respected although partnerships with parents and other providers within the EYFS are not actively promoted.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- notify Ofsted of any change to the individuals, such as significant changes in the committee's 'nominated individual' and committee members (Suitable people) 29/07/2009
- make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 29/07/2009
- provide an effective safeguarding children policy and 29/07/2009

procedure and ensure that this is understood by all members of staff (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare)

- use observation and assessments to identify learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating experiences for each child (The learning and development requirements).

15/10/2009

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- increase opportunities to work in partnership with parents and carers and involve them in their child's continuous learning and development and links with other providers within the EYFS.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The management team is currently reviewing their procedures and practice, which is a direct result of the recent number of significant changes to the structure of the management committee. Key personnel, who have recently taken over responsibilities, have identified a number of areas for improvement. They demonstrate a commitment towards improving the overall management to raise the standards in the setting. Nevertheless, Ofsted has not been informed about the latest changes to key personnel within the management committee. This is a breach in regulations and does not ensure that the required checks are made to assess the new members' suitability. Adequate recruitment and employment procedures are followed to confirm the suitability of practitioners who work with the children. Appraisal systems monitor staff development and ongoing suitability. There have been some improvements made since the last inspection, such as providing accessible drinking water for children during the session. Staff regularly engage with local authority early years pedagogue and informally reflect on their own practice. Basic systems are in place to monitor the overall quality of the provision and identify key areas to improve outcomes for children. For example, recent changes to daily routines create a calmer atmosphere at the beginning and end of the session. Key staff members are experienced, qualified and attend training to update their knowledge and skills. The remainder of the staff team are currently completing appropriate early years qualifications.

Basic records, policies and procedures that are required for safe management of the EYFS are in place and shared with parents. However, the majority of the policies have not been regularly reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet legal requirements. Consequently, there is no up-to-date procedure for parents to follow if they have a complaint and the safeguarding policy and procedure for parents does not reflect a number of changes to the Local Safeguarding Children Board. These are two further breaches of requirements that do not fully protect children and their families. Staff have clear roles and responsibilities and one member of staff is fully trained to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the setting and liaising with the local statutory authorities to safeguard children and their families. Ongoing safeguarding issues are addressed

by the staff team and children are protected in a safe environment, where risk assessments are completed and reviewed on a regular basis.

Partnerships with each child's family are adequate. Opportunities to share information and promote continuity of care for toddlers are promoted through daily diaries and informal chats. Parents are offered times to discuss their child's progress and staff are developing children's personal profiles to share with parents. Systems to establish links with other providers within the EYFS have not been established to create progression and continuity of learning and care for children. Staff work effectively in partnership with parents and other agencies to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Staff respect children's different cultural backgrounds and linguistic diversity is valued when staff provide opportunities for children to use their home language in their play and learning.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Key staff members have a basic understanding of the underlying principles of early years care and education and attend appropriate training to implement the EYFS throughout the setting. This information is cascaded to the rest of the staff team to develop their knowledge and understanding of the EYFS. Systems are regularly reviewed to create a more enabling environment where children develop independent, active learning with support from staff. Rooms are organised with areas of continuous provision that are clearly labelled and provide play and learning opportunities in the six areas of learning. Children move about freely and safely between the areas as they decide where they want to play next. They are encouraged to make their own choices and decisions when they take turns to choose an activity from displayed photographs and help staff to set out the resources. Toddlers enjoy exploring different resources or settle down to complete a puzzle. Children are offered time to practise and consolidate their learning as they play. A satisfactory balance of adult-directed and child-led activities are provided. Smaller group circle times provide opportunities for children to gather together as they sing songs, join in action rhymes or listen to stories. Children proudly find their own photograph to register each day.

Staff record their observations on children's play and learning and systems are developing to use these observations to inform future planning and assess children's progress towards the early learning goals. Staff plan imaginative focus activities, such as investigating natural resources, for their keyworker group of children. The effectiveness of the activity and outcomes for children are subsequently evaluated and the information is used to inform future planning. However, staff lack confidence and do not understand the value or purpose of observation and assessment procedures which, consequently, does not meet the requirements of the EYFS. Children's individual learning priorities are not identified to plan relevant and motivating experiences for each child.

Children share warm relationships with their key workers and respond positively to staff's reassurance, praise and encouragement. Children learn to share, take turns and play together cooperatively with discreet support from staff. Minor disagreements are skilfully dealt with in a way that is appropriate to each child's

age and stage of development. For example, staff encourage children to consider other people's feeling when they squabble. Children are encouraged to recognise and respond to potential risks and hazards when they move around the premises. A healthy lifestyle is adequately promoted. Staff endeavour to take children to the outdoor play area on a daily basis to enjoy games in the fresh air. The grassed area is exposed in all weather and is unsuitable for use when it wet. Energetic games are therefore provided indoors and plans to improve the outdoor area are underway. A choice of healthy options are provided for snacks. Adequate nappy changing procedures are in place and children are encouraged to accept responsibility for their own personal care needs as they use the toilets nearby.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	4
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	4
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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