

# The Meadows Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY380354
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<b>Inspector</b>	Tracey Jane Outram

<b>Setting address</b>	Catcliffe Primary School, Rotherham Road, Catcliffe, ROTHERHAM, South Yorkshire, S60 5SW
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<b>Type of setting</b>	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**

The Meadows Children's Centre opened in October 2008. The premises are located within the grounds of Catcliffe Primary School, and the children come from the local and surrounding areas. The children attending the setting are all aged under the age of three years and they share one playroom, which is divided into separate bays. The children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The centre is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00, for 51 weeks of the year with the exception of public holidays.

The children's centre is registered on the Early Years Register, and a maximum of 21 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 35 children on roll. The setting currently supports children who speak English as an additional language. There are seven members of staff who work directly with the children, all of whom are qualified to a minimum of level three.

## **Overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

The provision is satisfactory. The environment is hygienic, clean and well equipped. The children are keen to learn and they respond enthusiastically to the approachable and friendly members of staff who show sensitivity towards them. However, in some instances, the assessments records and the organisation of the daily routine does not maximise the learning opportunities for all children. The process of self-evaluation is developing well, and the manager has taken some positive steps to highlight areas for future development. Overall, the centre has a strong capacity for further improvement.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop the systems of including parents in the planning for the next steps in children's learning.
- develop the systems of assessments to ensure that children's progress is clearly recorded and observations cover all areas of the curriculum
- provide opportunities for all children to develop spoken language through sustained conversations with a wide range of others
- ensure that all children are included in a range of purposeful activities at all times.

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- request written parental permission at the time of the child's admission to the provision, to the seeking of any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment in the future (W.1.1).

12/05/2009

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

The children are cared for by an enthusiastic staff team who have a good attitude towards supporting children's good health and welfare. Overall, the daily operation of the setting is appropriate; qualification requirements are met and adult to child ratios are maintained. In addition, the recruitment and the vetting process for staff is good, and qualification requirements are exceeded due to the employment of two graduates who hold Early Years Professional Status. The manager of the setting works closely with the lead teacher in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the setting. Together they have developed plans for improvement, which are accurately targeted at in term of children's learning and development. However, the systems to ensure children's assessment records are maintained appropriately lack rigour.

The staff have a good understanding of how to keep children safe, risk assessments are completed on all areas of the children's play areas and the fire safety procedures are good. Frequent evacuation practises ensure that children are helped to maintain their personal safety and follow procedures in an emergency. Similarly, staff have a sound understanding of the local child protection procedures and they know what steps they should take if they are worried that a child is being abused or neglected. Appropriate systems are in place to ensure that the necessary policies and procedures are in place; this includes a behaviour management, safeguarding and a system for dealing with any complaints of concerns.

The links between parents and practitioners are good, and parents are extremely supportive of the setting. They appreciate the thoughtful and flexible settling in procedures along with the warm welcome they receive from the friendly and approachable members of staff. Parents receive some good quality information about the early year's provision. This includes newsletters, a prospectus and free access to all policies and procedures. In addition, key workers are in place to build strong bonds with families, and share aspects of the children's progress and daily activities. The setting have sought to consult with parents and issued questionnaires about the quality of the provision. Parents have made thoughtful suggestions, which staff are planning to address; this includes taking steps to improve partnerships by ensure that parents are consulted about planning for the next steps in their children's learning. The children's personal details are recorded effectively, although the system to request written parental permission to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment is not sufficient.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Members of staff create a relaxed and non-pressured environment where children can make choices build firm relationships. The children's personal, social and emotional development is fostered particularly well, they clearly feel comfortable and at ease within the setting. The children are developing a positive sense of themselves and a good attitude towards learning; they are confident to try new

activities and have high levels of concentration. In addition, the older children demonstrate very good self-help skills. They are able to attend to their own personal care needs, they help to tidy away the toys and show initiative by sweeping-up sand from the floor. Similarly, they demonstrate a good understanding of how to use equipment safely and through the provision of health meals and activities, such as baking. They are beginning to learn about the importance of nutrition and identify healthy and unhealthy food types.

Activities are interesting and there is a strong commitment towards nurturing children's creative and sensory development, through the exploration of a range of visual and tactile materials. Children handle a variety materials and tools, such as, clay, paint, sand, water and fabric to find out how they can be used in different ways. In addition, the daily experience of heuristic play provision aids investigation and discovery. Daily activities encourage the children to show an interest in numbers and information and communication technology. The children enjoy activities that introduce, sorting, ordering, measuring and making patterns, for instance, they use coloured bears to count and compared 'more' and 'less', and they explore volume and capacity through water play.

Music is a consistent feature of the setting and staff have taken positive steps to work in partnership with parents in order to obtain recordings of nursery songs in different languages. This demonstrates to children that their home languages are valued and introduced mono-lingual children to linguistic diversity. Babies and toddler benefit from frequent inclusion in singing songs, looking at books and being included in activities that encourage babbling and the formation of sounds. Similarly, older children are encouraged to listen carefully to what is said and staff consistently provide them with praise for their achievements, such as saying 'well done for listening'. However, at times staff do not encourage the older children to develop the confidence and vocabulary, which will support them to hold sustained conversations.

Overall, members of staff have a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and children's developmental needs. They aim to look for children's dominant schemes and take steps to provide activities that help children to make connections. The systems developed for planning and assessment of children's needs are good; however, they are not used systematically across the breadth of the curriculum to identify the achievements and progress of all children. For example, while some children's records are objective and highly informative, others are less developed and are not used effectively to move children to the next stage in their learning. In addition, staff are not always effectively deployed to make good simultaneous use of the outdoor and indoor play areas. Consequently, they are not alert to some children's preferences and there are times when children are not actively engaged in purposeful activities.

## 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

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	3
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?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

### Quality and standards

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	3
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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