

Puffins at Manston Terrace

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY300245
Inspection date	28/05/2009
Inspector	Joyce Bowler
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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

Puffins at Manston Terrace first opened in 1990 and was most recently re-registered in 2004. It is one of seven privately run nurseries in the Puffins of Exeter Ltd group. It operates from a three-storey listed building in the residential area of St Leonard's, Exeter, close to local shops, parks, schools, hospitals and the city centre. The nursery is open from Monday to Friday, from 07:30 until 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. The children are cared for in four groups, each with its own staff team. The babies aged from birth to 15 months are accommodated in the basement area; children aged 15 to 24 months and 20 to 30 months are accommodated on the ground floor and children aged 30 months to five years are accommodated on the first floor. The top floor of the building is used for staff and training facilities with a dedicated parents room. The fully enclosed, rear back garden is used for outdoor play and children are taken on outings to local facilities. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 72 children may attend at any one time. Currently, there are 87 children on roll.

The supernumerary nursery manager holds an Early years degree and Early Years Professional Status. He heads a team of 22 staff; 15 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications and 7 other members of staff are working towards National Vocational qualifications. The nursery also employs a cook. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association. Puffins of Exeter holds the 'Investors In People' Award.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is outstanding. There are many aspects of the provision that are key to this success most notably the setting's capacity to improve as seen in highly effective self-evaluation procedures and via strong leadership and management. The provider demonstrates a true commitment to inclusive practice and maintains an excellent partnership with parents. Children's welfare, learning and development needs are met extremely well. The provider is implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage framework with efficiency and skill ensuring that the individual needs of each child are paramount. Staff work very well as a large team and offer a professional and friendly welcome to all visitors, parents and carers.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- extending the risk assessment procedures to hold recorded daily checks in the relevant areas.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Puffins at Manston Terrace benefits from excellent management systems and strategic planning which ensures that the ethos of the company is followed consistently. Robust leadership and management underpins the day to day running of the nursery. It is evident that the voices of all staff are included in the daily organisation of the setting and that ongoing monitoring and self-evaluation are part of everyday practice. These feed in to regular monitoring audits and working groups. Currently, this is focussing on the induction process for parents and follow up feedback systems to ensure close links are maintained. The recently appointed manager has launched into his new role by undertaking a comprehensive audit of the premises and early years provision and, by using both company self-assessment systems and the Ofsted online self-evaluation, is producing intelligent plans for the future. These include creating resources to share between children's homes and the nursery, for example, book bags and increased use of 'home books'. It is evident that many issues have been addressed swiftly resulting in improvements to the use of the building, for example, children are able to access more free-flow play, have a café style 'running fruit and tea time', garden improvements are planned, role play and information and communication technology (ICT) resources have been extended and staff are receiving individual reward certificates for ideas and achievements. Puffins has a well established system of staff appraisal which includes acknowledgement of their work and creates teams of valued and respected staff. Training needs are identified and acted on. Staff benefit from attending courses run by external agencies as well as in-house at the company training centre. There is a staff newsletter 'Birds eye view' which keeps them up to date with what is happening at each Puffins setting. The mentoring system, which forms part of the thorough induction for new staff, offers valuable support for new starters. For example, by meeting them at the bus stop on their first day and making sure that they feel part of the Puffins team from the beginning and helping them to settle in. This practice is one illustration of the inclusive approach which is followed throughout the nursery and benefits all involved, especially the children. The deputy manager is an effective 'second in command' and is able to ensure efficient running of the nursery in the manager's absence. The manager and deputy are both supernumerary and they use this as an opportunity to work in each room and ensure that standards are maintained. This has led to the successful implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage as they ensure that weekly planning sheets are filled in routinely and staff are able to analyse their observations and use these to form plans which are relevant to the children attending. The nursery involves parents at every stage of their child's time at Puffins which results in excellent partnerships. Initial information is gathered from parents about their children including likes, dislikes and specific needs. These are updated regularly to ensure that what happens at nursery is relevant and makes use of parents' comments for children's next steps. Parents are responding in order to make important contributions to help maintain continuity of care. There are many effective systems of communication in place and these include newsletters, 'home book' diaries, the company website, information on notice boards throughout the building, feedback questionnaires and the parents' hand book. Home visits are made before children join Puffins and parents are able to

meet their child's key worker. The nursery holds notification of parental responsibility on file. Verbal feedback at drop off and collection times is a daily occurrence. There is a parents room available for meetings or to use while children enjoy their first short familiarisation sessions at the nursery. Children are safeguarded effectively as all policies and procedures are in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. All staff have completed training in child protection and are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The excellent planning and assessment systems show that staff at the nursery are implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) effectively for children in each age group. Children enjoy a wide variety of learning experiences which are designed to meet their individual needs by taking specific note of their behaviour, interests and stages of development. Staff link observations and evaluations to the EYFS guidance document in order to help children to make excellent progress at their own best rates. Plans are informed by parents' comments on the monthly interest sheets and show that staff take these into account. For example, when parents note that a child may need help in building confidence staff introduce activities to promote this in the document known as a PLOD or 'Possible Line of Development' for each child. Play opportunities are offered to the child to develop skills in the areas noted and these are cross referenced to the six areas of learning. Staff plan appropriately according to children's levels of knowledge and understanding in each age group. For example, older children are able to understand why it is good to receive reward stickers for good behaviour, achievements and trying hard while babies are helped to settle by forming affectionate bonds with staff and becoming confident in exploring the spaces and resources available. There are good settling in procedures in place to help children feel valued members of the nursery and these include being able to bring in comforters or favourite items. Planning is flexible and staff provide children with choice and self selection. Assessment systems are collated in the 'celebration of my achievements' files which are added to by all staff, not just the child's key person. Staff reflect on children's learning and development and are producing a clear picture of children's individual progress while at the nursery. The programme for supporting children with additional needs and those who have English as an additional language is well established and overseen by the special needs coordinator or SENCO. She works closely with all allied agencies and families and ensures that children's individual educational and health care plans are followed appropriately. All staff members are friendly and welcoming and offer children plenty of care and support. They encourage communication for all ages via lots of chat and discussion, singing and self expression in role play and exploration of appropriate resources. The curriculum is broad and offers learning through play both indoors and out. Visitors are invited in to meet the children and most recently these have included people in the community, such as police officers and animals, such as donkeys. The garden is used daily in all weathers and outings are a regular occurrence at the nursery. For example, children in the two to three years age group enjoy walking trips to a local shop to buy stamps and post the letters that they have written. On the way they are helped to learn basic road safety and allowed to stop and take time to look at interesting things such as diggers, dogs

and flowers. All outings are risk assessed, children wear wrist straps and parental permissions are obtained. In the nursery building staff have safety measures in place to protect children such as safety gates, radiator covers and windows with guards which allow healthy ventilation. Written risk assessments are in place and are currently under review. Full daily checks are made for each room and the outside area but records are held centrally in the office and not visible in individual rooms or garden which might limit access for all staff. Effective health and safety procedures are followed such as using anti-bacterial hand gel before entering a room, not wearing outdoor shoes on floors which are crawled on and storing dummies hygienically. Children are learning to keep themselves safe via acceptable codes of conduct and plenty of praise for good behaviour, sharing and cooperative play. Children's specific dietary requirements are adhered to. Snacks and meals are prepared on the premises and fresh food is sourced locally. Menus are available to parents and offer an appetising variety of good home cooked meals. Children eat their meals together in a sociable arrangement around small tables. Babies are fed around semicircular tables which enable staff to maintain good eye contact with each one and to keep the spoonfuls coming at the right pace. Those who are ready to feed themselves are encouraged to do so. The nursery makes the most of display space at children's height and offers plenty of resources which are accessible to children and babies. Children move freely between areas and rooms on each floor. All documentation required by registration is in place and there are extra policies and procedures which are shared with parents.

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?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	1
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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