

Ditton Early Years Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | EY280132 |
| Inspection date | 27/04/2009 |
| Inspector | Anna Dawson |
| Setting address | Dundalk Road, Widnes, Cheshire, WA8 8DF |
| Telephone number | 0151 424 4687 |
| Email | |
| 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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Ditton Early Years Centre opened in 2004 and forms part of Ditton Children's Centre, which is located in the Widnes area of Cheshire. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the childcare register. It is run by Halton Borough Council and the headteacher takes day-to-day responsibility for the management of the provision.

The centre operates from purpose built premises and provides full day and out of school care for children aged from birth to under eight years. Children are cared for within five rooms according to their age. The centre also houses a nursery school and provides rooms used by Sure Start to offer various parent and family support groups. A maximum of 82 children may attend the centre at any one time, including 32 places available for out of school and holiday care. The centre is open each week day from 08.00 to 18.00 for 52 weeks of the year, with the exception of the Christmas period and public holidays.

All children share access to the outdoor play areas. There are currently 71 children aged from birth to under eight years on roll. There are 16 of the children under two, including three babies under one year and 24 are two years old.

In the out of school club, there are six children under nine and six children over nine attending of which two are under 5. Children mostly attend from the local area or their parents travel to work in the area. The centre employs 11 members of staff, including the day care manager. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are currently working towards accreditation for the Foundation Stage Degree.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. It is inclusive and meets the needs of the children. Good quality learning opportunities help children to enjoy their time and achieve well but at times opportunities are missed to extend children's language and communication skills. Excellent quality policies and procedures are in place to ensure children's safety and well-being, consequently children have an extremely good understanding how to keep safe and stay healthy. There is good capacity to improve further as leadership and management are good; there is excellent integrated working with the nursery and good improvement from the last inspection. However, the centre plan lacks rigour and although there is a good partnership with parents, there is more to do to help parents become involved in their children's learning.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure the Centre Development Plan is more rigorous in identifying variations

- in children's progress and attainment
- develop further the ongoing records of children's achievements, which parents can share and contribute to ensure that the staff consistently promote children's communication and language skills.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

There is good leadership and management of the setting. The setting manager is successful in creating a team of staff who work together well to promote challenging and motivating learning experiences for children. The setting is fully inclusive and successful in meeting the needs of the children. The quality of self-evaluation is good overall and senior leaders understand the strengths and areas for improvement well. They involve managers, parents and children in developing its aims and priorities. Resources are deployed effectively to meet the needs of the children.

The welfare and learning of the children are at the heart of leadership and management by all the staff. Managers are kept well informed and are involved in ensuring the safety of the children. The promotion of children's welfare is outstanding. The rigorous daily safety checks as well as the dialogue maintained with parents/carers regarding matters such as hygiene, medication, accidents and incidents ensure that children are kept extremely safe. The procedures and practice to safeguard children are outstanding. All statutory requirements are met, including checks on the suitability of the staff.

The staff know the children extremely well and work hard to meet their needs. As a result all children have an equal opportunity to succeed and their needs are met well. The provision is well organised and runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis because staff morale is high, their roles are well defined and they have good subject knowledge. Staff work towards a common purpose based on ongoing meetings and their daily evaluations of their work. The quality of self-evaluation overall is good. Although, much discussion takes place about children's progress and attainment informally, the centre planning for day care and out of school care lacks rigour in recording the evaluations of children's attainment, progress and setting future targets to aid the direction for improving the outcomes for children.

The setting promotes community cohesion well. This is evident in the excellent partnership with the nursery and effective partnerships with the neighbouring primary school and local services. Children become aware of the needs and differing traditions of those within their community and beyond. The charity collections and visits made to shops and places of interest in the locality contribute effectively to the children's growing appreciation of diversity.

Partnership with parents is good. The school has very good day-to-day relationships with parents who speak highly of the setting. Most parents say they are kept well informed about their children's progress through parents' meetings and newsletters and daily diaries. However, parents get insufficient information

about their children's learning day to day. This means that there are not enough opportunities for them to contribute to and share in their children's achievements.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The quality of provision overall is good. Children's welfare and their learning, is at the heart of the centre's work. The staff are knowledgeable and skilled and place great emphasis on the development of children's personal and social skills. This ensures positive relationships with all children and enables those new to the setting to settle quickly. Babies are happy and content as staff encourage them to enjoy learning for example, during exploratory water play. Because they feel safe and secure the result is good learning and development. Behaviour is excellent. Children show very positive attitudes to learning and are very keen to join in the activities the staff provide. They are independent in making their own choices and move freely between the indoor and outdoor provision. Children's imagination develops well through role-play, where staff demonstrate well how to take on a role. Children enjoy their learning and play extremely well together with their friends, sharing resources and taking turns for example, in measuring and weighing ingredients for their cheese scones. Staff are good role models and reinforce good manners, which is evident, for instance, when children say thank you to the cook for their lunch.

Staff make frequent assessments on children's learning throughout the day. They discuss the evaluations of activities and children's responses during their meetings and use effectively their overall evaluations to plan the next activities. The staff know the children's attainments very well, and ensure the challenges they present result in children making good progress in all areas of learning from their starting points. Activities enable all children to enjoy their learning and be successful and children have a growing awareness of the diversity of our society and the needs of others. However, daily planning lacks rigour in focusing staff on how to challenge individual or groups of children or groups to develop their language and communication skills where the attainment of some children can be raised. Consequently, some opportunities are missed to develop children's language skills, which slow down children's pace of learning. For instance, when children are playing outdoors on the slide or boat discussion is not as sharp as it could be to prompt children's thinking and the development of their speaking skills. Children attending the out of school care take part in a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities that meet their needs. From questionnaires received, children enjoy a variety of activities such as games outside and finger painting as well as the tea provided.

Staff teach the children extremely well about safety. There are excellent facilities and security arrangements are extremely good. Risks assessments indoors and outdoors are rigorous. Because staff ensure children know how to use resources safely, children move around responsibly and use outdoor equipment sensibly without bumping into one another.

Children's understanding of staying healthy is outstanding. Children enjoy plenty of

exercise and healthy snacks of fruit and vegetables, saying that they 'are tasty and good for you'. Water is freely available and children enjoy making food such as cheese scones, which they greatly enjoy at teatime. Growing some of their own vegetables reinforces children's understanding of healthy food. Lunchtimes are pleasant and sociable occasions and staff take the opportunity to reinforce the names and types of healthy foods. The food is of very high quality and is freshly prepared on the premises. Children wash their hands before eating and brush their teeth afterwards. Very good hygiene and health practices ensure cleanliness is extremely good.

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

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

Leadership and management

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| How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed? | 2 |
| How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement? | 2 |
| How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others? | 2 |
| How well are children safeguarded? | 1 |

Quality and standards

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| How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop? | 2 |
| 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? | 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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met