

University of Exeter Family Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

105920

Inspection date

16/12/2009

Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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.

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Description of the setting

Exeter University Family Centre was established in 1973. The family centre is managed by the University of Exeter. It operates in a purpose-built building situated on the University of Exeter campus. There are secure outdoor play areas suitable for children's use. The setting operates for 42 weeks per year, opening Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 5.30pm. A play scheme also operates for four weeks during the summer holidays.

The family centre is registered to provide care for a maximum of 53 children in the early years age range, at any one time. There are currently 80 children in this age group attending at different times. The setting also provides care for children aged over five years to 11 years. This provision is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

There are currently 18 staff employed to work directly with children, 16 of whom have appropriate childcare qualifications to at least level 3. The remaining two members of staff are currently working towards their level 3 qualification. Childcare staff are supported by a cook and an administrator.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children's needs are met extremely well. They benefit from an immensely inclusive environment where individual children's cultures and languages are respected and celebrated. Staff work very closely with parents and carers to ensure they have a thorough understanding of each child's specific requirements, and use their knowledge extremely effectively in planning to ensure that children's individual needs are consistently supported. There is a strong commitment to providing high quality childcare and to ensuring that children make progress in their learning and development, and this is reflected in the excellent systems used to monitor practice at all levels within the setting. This results in plans for the future that are well focused and that enable staff to sustain high standards in promoting children's welfare, learning and development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue with planned reviews of documentation such as policies and procedures, maintaining current good practice in ensuring that these provide up to date and relevant guidance to staff

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Extremely strong, motivated leadership and management within the setting has resulted in a confident staff team who demonstrate an excellent understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), and implement these most effectively. This results in children being very well safeguarded, as staff have a thorough understanding of their responsibility to protect children in their care. The clear safeguarding procedures are known and implemented well by staff, who ensure that parents are also aware of these. All staff undertake safeguarding training, and have a firm understanding of Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures. Children are kept safe and secure at all times. Risk assessments, and daily routines and health and safety checks, are excellent. Health and safety responsibilities are understood very well because all staff complete training in this area, and they are conscientious in their implementation of safety routines. For example, ensuring that any possible hazards are noted and immediately reported in order that prompt action can be taken. Risk assessments are used very effectively by staff as working documents and it can be clearly seen where they have reviewed and updated these in order to keep children safe. All regulatory documentation is clear and well maintained. Registers show the times children are present, records of staff attendance confirm ratios are met, and any accidents or incidents involving children are recorded and these are shared with parents. Policies and procedures are very clear, providing good quality guidance for staff, and these are accessible to parents. Monitoring processes within the setting include an annual review of documentation by managers to ensure these continue to reflect good practice, and this is currently in progress.

Managers in the setting have successfully promoted a culture of reflective practice, resulting in all staff making meaningful contributions to the ongoing self-evaluation process. There is a strong commitment to staff training and development, resulting in a team who are well motivated, skilled and confident. Planning for the future is focused on improving outcomes for children, and staff take account of their views, and those of their parents, when considering any changes. For example, significant changes have been made to the organisation of snack time for older children in the setting, this was as a result of observations and discussions with children, which made it clear that they would prefer a more flexible arrangement. Staff have noted that children have benefited in different ways, for example, all children are developing greater self-confidence through making choices about when, and what, they eat. For some children, there has been a positive impact on behaviour, as they have responded well to being given responsibility for managing their own needs. Self-evaluation focuses very well on how effectively the setting meets the needs of all children and ensures that no child, or group of children, is disadvantaged. For example, staff are particularly pro-active in supporting children who have English as an additional language. They ensure that children have access to resources and activities that reflect and celebrate their home languages as well as supporting their understanding of English. For example, children from all cultures and communities enjoy using dual language books and computer games.

Staff work extremely closely with parents to ensure their children's individual needs

are understood and met. They encourage parents to become involved in their children's learning and development, for example, asking them to keep staff informed of children's current interests and enthusiasms at home that can be further developed as part of their child's individual learning plan. Settling in periods are flexible to support individual family requirements, parents and children being encouraged to visit as often as they need in order to feel comfortable in the setting and to get to know key adults. Some children receive care from more than one provider of the EYFS, for instance, if they attend preschool or are collected by a childminder. In these situations, the setting makes links with the other providers in order to ensure there is consistency in developing children's individual learning plans and in monitoring their progress.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children's welfare, learning and development is supported extremely well. Staff promote their health and safety very effectively, ensuring that children develop a secure understanding and awareness of issues such as personal hygiene, and keeping safe. For example, weekly practices of emergency evacuation procedures ensure that children have a very good understanding of what to do in the event of a fire, and older children can give a clear account of what they must do to stay safe. Children learn to conduct themselves safely, for example, they carefully carry scissors across the room, holding them point down so there is no risk of accident to themselves or others. Health promotion with children is very good. Older children confidently manage their own personal hygiene, and they show a developing awareness of how to protect themselves from the risk of illness and cross infection. For example, they understand that 'germs' can be spread through coughing and sneezing and so they take care to use tissues and dispose of these appropriately. Staff support babies and very young children in developing a simple awareness of basic hygiene through routines such as washing hands before meals; singing songs and making these routines fun for children helps to instil good habits for the future. Sickness procedures are very thorough and detailed, providing clear information to parents regarding exclusion times for example, following upset stomachs. Any individual health requirements, including any dietary needs, are clearly recorded and known to all staff. Meals and snacks are provided by the setting, these are well balanced and nutritious. Children receive a good variety of fresh fruit and vegetables every day, and mealtimes are used well to promote their understanding of a healthy diet. Menus are prepared in advance and shared with parents and these take account of individual cultural or medical requirements. Babies and very young children are supported very well as they progress from liquid to solid food, and begin to feed themselves, and all children benefit from the social environment of mealtimes.

Children make consistently excellent progress towards the early learning and development goals, relative to their individual starting points. This is because staff use their observations extremely well in developing individual plans for children that focus most effectively on how to achieve the next steps in each area of learning. Systems used to monitor children's progress provide very good evidence of what children have achieved and how they have done so. The learning

environment for each age group is thoughtfully considered to take account of children's interests, and their individual learning styles. For example, children immensely enjoy being able to freely choose whether to play indoors or outside, and very good organisation of resources ensures that activities such as mark making, construction and creative play are accessible to children across both areas. This particularly benefits active learners, for example, children who find it restricting to sit at a table to write or draw, gleefully use paintbrushes and buckets of water to paint their name across the patio, and use chalks to create pictures and to practise formative writing.

Children are extremely enthusiastic participants who enjoy a very good balance of adult-led activities and child-initiated play. Staff use planned and structured activities very effectively in introducing new ideas to children. For example, older children enjoyed a story where a child learned about Impressionist painting, and they were keen to know more. Staff developed their interest by encouraging them to explore Impressionist paintings in books and to make their own representations of their favourites, resulting in immensely individual pieces of artwork. Younger children thoroughly enjoy listening to a story about a bear hunt, joining in with familiar phrases and learning about concepts such as 'under' and 'over'. They then enthusiastically re-enact this with staff, moving their bodies well as they pretend to be the characters in the story. Children develop their own play well, using activities and resources to consolidate what they have learned. For example, children in the home corner are 'making dinner' for four, carefully counting out plates and cutlery and checking they have the right amount of each item. They put pots and pans on the table and remind each other that these may be hot and to 'be careful'. Children of all ages are actively encouraged to explore and investigate. For example, babies and very young children thoroughly enjoy exploring a variety of media and materials that introduce them to different textures; slightly older children have a wonderful time investigating the sounds of simple percussion instruments and the rhythms they can make with these. Throughout the nursery, children's diversity is acknowledged and respected. Children learn about each other's languages and cultures. For example, at the time of inspection, festivals relating to several traditions were imminent, and children had the opportunity to learn about, and participate in, celebrations relating to their own and their friends' cultures.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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