



Highbridge Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY274638
Inspection date	10 January 2006
Inspector	Rachael Williams / Elaine Douglas
Setting Address	7 Coronation Road, Highbridge, Somerset, TA9 3JD
Telephone number	01278 780665
E-mail	
Registered person	Highbridge Childrens Centre
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Highbridge Children's Centre is a children's centre run in partnership with Beechfield Infants School, North Sedgemoor Opportunity Playgroup, family support services and health visitors from the local doctor's surgery. It offers a variety of family support services including a children's nursery. It operates from a new timber frame, purpose built structure situated within the grounds of Beechfield Infants School in Highbridge, Somerset. The nursery has three main play rooms, a sensory and therapy room, two

kitchens, a sleep room, toilet facilities and office. Children have access to two secure outside play areas within the grounds; one is equipped with large play equipment.

There are currently 128 children from birth to 5-years on roll. This includes 54 children receiving funded nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children who have special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 17.45 for 50 weeks of the year. They offer sessional and full day care.

There are 19 staff work directly with the children, 16 have level 3 or above early years qualifications and 2 staff members are currently on a training programme to achieve a level 2 qualification. The group receive support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children thrive because staff follow highly effective procedures and practices which meet the children's physical, nutritional and health needs. Daily routines ensure that children remain healthy; such as, hygienic nappy changing arrangements and cleaning regimes where children are protected from the cross contamination of germs. Children are introduced to hygienic practices; for instance, effective hand washing arrangements where liquid soap and paper towels are used to promote health. Crawling babies benefit from a 'no shoe' policy in the baby unit allowing them to crawl freely in a clean and well maintained area. Children are supported by staff's good knowledge of administering first aid. Staff's appropriate training is depicted on their name badge. Appropriate consent is obtained to administer medication which is recorded appropriately. However; parents do not countersign the medication record to acknowledge administration.

Children are introduced to a healthy lifestyle through a range of nutritious snacks, such as dips, bread sticks and vegetables, and meals, such as pasta and salad. Baby's health is maintained through staff's good knowledge of storing prepared food and bottles and it's appropriate reheating. Staff take account of children's individual and cultural needs when providing snacks and meals. For example, photo identification of children and their special dietary needs are displayed appropriately in the kitchen.

Children benefit from daily opportunities to be active, both inside and out doors, as a range of stimulating activities are planned to encourage physical development. For example, children develop large muscle skills when sliding, balancing and climbing on the outdoor play equipment. Staff have good knowledge of children's needs and support their need to be active, even when it is wet; for instance, through an impromptu music and movement session in small groups. Baby's enjoy regular fresh air experiences to promote their health. Older children are aware of their personal

needs; for instance, through accessing drinks when thirsty and visiting the toilet facilities independently.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move freely around a safe, well maintained environment which is spacious and welcoming. Risks of accident or injury to children are minimised because staff are extremely vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. Children receive clear explanations from staff to help them learn to protect themselves and others. For example, in the toddler room a basket of play fruit and shopping is tipped on the floor and immediately a member of staff supports the toddler in picking the items up and explaining that if they are left on the floor someone might trip and hurt themselves.

Well written policies and procedures, understood and implemented by staff, ensure children's wellbeing is safeguarded. Babies remain safe whilst sleeping as they are checked regularly and information is recorded to share with parents. Good communication between staff ensures babies are protected whilst sleeping as a monitor is set up in the toddler room, when the other babies go outside, to ensure he is still regularly checked. Comprehensive collection arrangements ensure children's welfare is safeguarded. Photographs are added to the home link book to ensure an appropriate adult is collecting. A password system is implemented to further ensure children's safety.

Children's welfare is safeguarded through staff's good knowledge of child protection. Staff have good understanding of the possible signs to look for, the procedures to follow and the confidential recording of observations. The child protection policy does not clearly identify the procedure to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff, however, the designated member of staff is clear on the procedure.

Children have independent access to a range of high quality equipment, resources and toys which are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children with special needs are safe and fully included because of the sensitive adult support and well planned adaptations to the environment and activities, especially through the use of the sensory room.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very settled, happy and confident within the well organised setting. They enjoy their time and achieve well because staff are dedicated and skilful. Staff have exceptional understanding of how children develop through their knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework and the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage, in order to provide high quality care and education. For example, robust planning in the baby unit clearly shows how babies enjoy a stimulating range of activities to support their rapid progression, as identified in the well documented

assessment records.

Early communication skills are extremely well supported through high quality adult/child interactions. For example, baby's babble is acknowledged and responded to well by interested staff. Babies and toddlers are beginning to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they join in with a diverse range of exploratory and sensory experiences. For example, children are excited and animated when they investigate the gloop and their exploration is supported thoroughly by appropriate questioning by staff. Toddlers are given clear explanations on how to play games, such as the 'snail pace race' game. Through staff's good knowledge of the children and how they learn, their enthusiasm is maintained during the game as staff are aware of how long the children can sit for and shortens the game as children's attention wanes.

A dynamic learning environment has been established where staff deploy themselves effectively to support children's developing needs. An excellent range of easily accessible resources and toys encourage children to develop their ideas independently. Younger children are well supported in their self-chosen activities through effective staff deployment. For example, in their role-play when a cup of tea is made for a member of staff who asks the child whether it is hot and how she can cool it down.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children make rapid progress towards the early learning goals in all areas, according to their capability and starting points. Staff have an excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and implement it exceptionally well, planning exciting activities which motivate children to learn. Children are shown all the activities available and staff demonstrate some ways of using them without being prescriptive. The excellent deployment of staff provides consistently high interaction, as they ask good open-ended questions to find out what children know and then extend their knowledge and vocabulary. For example, one child in the role-play area asks what glasses are for; the member of staff asks her where glasses are worn and they discuss how some people's eyes do not see as well as others.

Thorough systems to observe and record children's achievements ensure staff are very knowledgeable about individual children. Staff use this knowledge and the records to plan each child's next stage of development, this ensures children continue to make excellent progress. Staff value all children and their contributions. Those with special educational needs receive high quality support from individual staff that provide the right amount of interaction to enable them to access the curriculum fully. Staff and children use sign language, such as Somerset Total Communication, to ensure all are included. Staff provide a stimulating environment which encourages children to become independent learners.

Children are extremely confident and eager to learn. Their behaviour is exceptional; they understand the expectations of them and are polite and thoughtful. This is due to staff providing excellent role-models and giving clear explanations. For example, staff explain why it is not safe for all the children to be in the role-play area together.

Consequently children are respectful to staff and to each other. Children are empowered by excellent opportunities to make decisions and choices, and as a result have high self-esteem.

Children develop excellent communication skills as they engage in high quality conversations, sometimes recalling past events. They independently use books and develop a superb understanding that books are also used to retrieve information. For example, when looking at duck eggs they use a book to look at different types of eggs and discuss the differences. Excellent resources encourage children to practise writing skills in their play and give meaning to their marks. Children sound out letters and recognise rhyming words, adding their own. They recognise their names and the older and more able children recognise those of other children. They read simple words such as yes and no when operating the computer.

Children's mathematical development is enhanced by staff using daily routines and planned activities to teach. For example, staff asked if there are enough chairs for everyone to have one and how many more they need. Children confidently count to 10 and beyond and recognise some numerals. They enthusiastically experiment with volume as they pour water from one container to another. Children are competent in their use of computers and the interactive board. Staff skilfully use children's enthusiasm for Information Computer Technology (ICT) to extend learning in other areas, such as asking them what other shapes they can make. Children frequently use equipment, such as magnifying glasses, to look closely at differences and changes, and to explore the natural world. Children take part in well researched, appropriate activities to enhance their knowledge of the cultural diversity within our community.

Children use their knowledge of the world well in role-play. For example, one child puts on the nurses uniform and takes on the role of a nurse. She applies bandages to a member of staff, takes her temperature and makes notes. She is extremely gentle and informs her she will be better soon. Children's creativity is enhanced by the staff's expert practice of allowing children to take adult led activities in their own direction. For example, a child drawing a picture of the egg she has previously planted with cress seeds gives the eggs limbs and makes them into members of her family. Children dance and sing with enthusiasm, and frequently mix paint and use a variety of materials to create in two and three dimensions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are settled and happy within the setting. Friendly and enthusiastic staff support the children who play a full part in the nursery. Staff value and respect children's individuality and have good knowledge of their needs and family backgrounds. Regular discussions with parents and the effective use of the home link book ensures continuity in care and learning. Close and caring relationships have been established and children have an excellent sense of trust and belonging.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. Younger children play co-operatively and are able to take turns when playing games with minimal support. Children are respectful and

polite and staff are excellent role-models. For example, their calm approach to managing behaviour encourages children to calmly resolve issues. Children are keen to please and are helpful towards each other; for instance children enjoy helping staff to tidy away in the toddler room.

All children receive excellent support in the fully inclusive setting. Abundant resourcing and organisation of the provision ensures activities can be adapted to include all children. An excellent referral system is in place to ensure all children receive maximum support. Parents are well supported and are given clear information relating to their child's specific need and education plan. The children have numerous opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through planned activities; such as, visiting the local Chinese take-away to purchase noodles during Chinese New Year, visitors to the nursery and outings to local places of interest on the Wednesday welly walk. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.

Partnership with parents is outstanding which contributes significantly to children's wellbeing within the nursery. Children benefit from the superb relationship staff build with the parents. Home visits give parents excellent opportunities to provide staff with detailed information on their child. This ensures staff can meet the children's individual needs and plan effectively for their development. Parents are actively involved in the setting and are encouraged to share their skills, such as dancing. An excellent range of informative literature is available to the parents relating to the provision for their child. This includes excellent information on the Foundation Stage curriculum both verbally and in writing. There is a good exchange of information on collection, through the home link book, display boards, notice boards and regular newsletters to ensure parents are kept well informed of the activities provided and the provision for their child. Key workers are used effectively to liaise with parents. For example, new parents are introduced to their child's key worker who explains the process for assessing their child's achievements, which includes ongoing parent consultations.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from highly qualified and skilled staff who are effectively inducted. Staff biographies ensure suitable staff are working directly with the children. The robust appraisal system ensures that the nursery's comprehensive policies and procedures are consistently applied. All staff are dedicated and committed to continuous improvement and development. Staff are actively involved in improving the setting to ensure continuity of the high standards of care and education. An efficient mentoring system is in place to ensure new staff are well supported. Children benefit from appropriate grouping and close links with their key worker and there is good information available to support this role and its effective implementation.

The premises are well organised to maximise play opportunities for children. An effective point system is in operation to ensure children are closely supervised and ratios are maintained. However; the daily register does not show accurate times of

arrival and departure, especially in the pre-school room. All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and wellbeing, is in place and regularly reviewed.

The good quality of the provision means that the nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding. The head of care and education leads the pre-school and provides an exemplary role-model, which ensures high quality teaching and behaviour management. Excellent communication and shared involvement in planning provides a dedicated, committed team, who are highly motivated. Thorough systems are used to evaluate practice and monitor staff development, to maintain high quality education.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last education inspection the nursery had a point for consideration relating to the use of assessments.

A robust assessment system is in place to continually monitor children's progression effectively. This is shared regularly with parents to keep them well informed about their child's progression towards the early learning goals.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop a registration system that accurately records children's daily attendance

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk