



Dawes Community Childcare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 160294
Inspection date 24 January 2006
Inspector Beryl Witheridge

Setting Address The Dawes Community Centre, Forstal, Hernhill, Faversham, Kent, ME13 9JG
Telephone number 01227 751665
E-mail
Registered person Dawes Community Childcare 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Dawes Community Childcare Centre opened in 1992. It operates from the community centre in Hernhill, Faversham, Kent. The centre has access to two rooms, a kitchen, an office, toilets and an outside area.

The centre is registered to provide care and education for 33 children between the ages of 2 and under 8 years. Children up to the age of 11 may attend the out of

school club and holiday play scheme. There are currently 35 children on roll. Of these 19 children receive funding for nursery education.

Children attend a variety of sessions each week. The centre has experience in supporting children with special needs and children with English as an additional language.

The centre opens from Mondays to Fridays, for fifty weeks of the year, closing for 2 weeks at Christmas. Sessions are from 08.00 to 17.30.

There are seven staff employed at the centre; five of these hold an early years qualification and one is currently undertaking training. The group receives support from a Pre-School Learning Alliance development worker, a special needs advisor and a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning good hygiene routines. They are encouraged to be independent in their routines including toilet visits and hand washing, although no clear explanation is given as to why they must wash their hands. Effective cleaning procedures help prevent cross infection, such as wiping tables with an anti-bacterial spray before and after eating. Staff use disposable gloves when changing nappies which are disposed of hygienically. Children's good health is promoted through effective procedures for when they are ill or have an accident. For example accidents are recorded correctly and children do not attend the nursery if they are ill. Written permission is given by parents for the administration of medication such as antibiotics. Staff are aware that children may attend who have a specific medical need but have not received the training from a professional to provide the required care for that specific need in an emergency.

Children are introduced to healthy eating habits and are encouraged to try new foods. Drinks are freely available to children at all times throughout the day. They have a choice of fresh fruits and vegetables, biscuits and breadsticks at snack time, after school children are also offered toast with different toppings of their choice. Parents supply the lunch for their children providing them with foods that meet their dietary needs. Dairy products can be stored safely in the fridge if there is no cool pack in the lunch boxes.

Children have the opportunity to take part in physical activities every day, both indoors and outside. They can use the safe outdoor swing park which provides them with opportunities to climb and use large equipment. They also have access to a large field where they can run and play in the good weather. Children are encouraged to go out every day for some fresh air, putting on their coats and gloves to protect them against the cold, in the winter. They show a good bodily awareness when using the climbing frame, they are confident movers crawling over and under the equipment and balancing well. Opportunities to improve fine motor movements

are provided through activities such as cutting, sticking, painting and construction.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. The premises are spacious providing the children with plenty of room to play and move around safely. Best use is not always made of the available space with opportunities missed to provide children with more choice of activities. Toys and equipment are regularly checked to ensure they are safe and in good condition for children to use. Outdoor areas are checked before children go out to ensure there are no hazards.

Most children know how to keep themselves safe in the event of a fire. Fire evacuation drills are carried out every two months and are recorded in the fire log. Staff do not yet ensure that these are carried out over several days so that all children who attend know the correct procedures to follow. The fire log for both the nursery and the out of school club is not always readily accessible.

Children receive constant support from the required staff ratios, staff always ensure that they inform another member of staff if they have to leave the room, are going into the kitchen or need to speak to a parent.

Children are kept safe from potential abusive situations through comprehensive child protection procedures. Several staff have attended child protection training. Existing injuries are recorded in the accident book. All visitors to the provision must sign in and out in the visitors' book and are escorted at all times while on the premises. There is not a named person with responsibility for child protection as stated in the National Standards.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children of all ages and stages of development enjoy a range of activities, resources and experiences within a caring environment. Younger children receive extra attention and support when learning new skills or routines. Children have a good relationship with staff and are not afraid to ask for a cuddle or reassurance. Children have free access to a selection of activities and are given opportunities to make free choices. Staff understand the need to provide children with different learning experiences to help them grow and develop but are not linking these with the early learning goals for the younger children. Children find it difficult to sit still and quiet for long periods and the daily routines are sometimes too restrictive, for example they are expected to sit for a story, then sit for lunch, then sit and watch a children's television programme, some children become restive and disruptive at these times. Story time at the end of the day is also very disruptive with parents wandering in, talking to each other and children running between parents and the story. As a result, children take very little pleasure in self selecting books and showing an interest in the written word. Children benefit from staff taking an interest in their needs and some

staff are very good at assessing a child's mood and addressing the needs at that particular moment. For example when a child had lost interest in the children's television programme after lunch but really wanted to make a Chinese lantern, a member of staff moved to sit with her at the table and helped her to make her lantern while the other children enjoyed the television programme. Children have many opportunities to use large equipment and thoroughly enjoy using the climbing frame, they take turns and share extremely well.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Children's progress towards the early learning goals is happening but most learning is incidental and is not planned for. Staff have not received a sound training in the Foundation Stage and early learning goals. Planning available is very minimal. The yearly planning broadly identifies generally the early learning goals which staff will look at in any given month throughout the year. A daily themed activity sheet identifies what children are expected to learn from that activity and how to help them achieve that, it does not currently include information about differentiation, although this is an area which has just been added to the daily themed activity sheet. An evaluation of the themed activity is carried out and recorded. There is no evidence of how staff are expected to know which areas of learning they are targeting during all the activities which are provided for the children throughout each day and week. There is a keyworker system in place and each keyworker is responsible for keeping their children's records up to date, although all staff are involved in making observations. The next steps for children's learning are not clearly identified in their records therefore it is impossible for this to be used to lead the future planning. Staff extend children's confidence by encouraging all children to take part and join in activities or to give them a try.

Children are confident and friendly, they come happily into the group and settle into play easily. They are becoming independent as they move around the room, make choices about activities and take themselves to the toilet. They are learning good manners and use please and thank you regularly, especially at snack and meal times. They are able to follow routines such as putting toys away, putting rubbish in the bin and pushing chairs under the table when they have finished eating. Children are unable to show pride and achievement in their independent work is not displayed anywhere around the room, only adult led displays such as 'the very hungry caterpillar', which was part of their mini-beasts project. Children share and take turns well, which keeps them safe especially when using the climbing frame. Children are able to recognise their names and some can link the sound of the first letter to their name but this is the only time linking sounds and letters is introduced to the children. There are few opportunities to use writing and mark making in play experiences and there is little evidence of children attempting to write their names or forming letters correctly. Children enjoy singing songs and the older children encourage the younger ones to join in. There is a warm comfortable book area for the children but they do not appear to have an interest in books and rarely self select a book. Children are able to count in a group situation such as counting their names on the name snake, some older children can confidently counting to thirteen without adult support. They are not provided with opportunities to do simple mathematics such as addition or subtraction, calculation or measuring in play situations. Children are able to

recognise simple shapes such as a square but some need more encouragement and practice at this. Children are beginning to learn some simple comparative language but staff miss opportunities to include this in activities.

Children are beginning to learn about the world about them. They have looked at mini-beasts and the natural world. They are introduced to different cultures and festivals such as Chinese New Year. Children are able to recognise days of the week and months of the year and the different seasons and what effect that has on the weather. They show an interest in programmable toys but need a lot of adult support to understand how these work. Opportunities to learn about people in the community or those close to them are missed, children rarely have the chance to talk about themselves, their families or significant events. Children are using their imaginations in some of their play activities, they build the train track and then introduce a farm with horses next to it, combining two groups of children playing alongside each other happily. They enjoy using paint and mixing colours, they like to experiment with different tools when painting such as brushes and sponges, some children like to use their fingers. Children love dancing to music, joining in with a character on the television programme they are watching and moving around the room freely and uninhibited. Children's physical development is encouraged through good use of the climbing equipment indoors and the large outdoor play space with suitable play equipment. Hand and eye co-ordination is developing with the use of scissors, gluing and building with construction.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into the nursery and cared for according to their individual needs. Children develop self assurance and confidence when making choices or seeking support and assurance from staff. All children are included in all aspects of the nursery and out of school club. Children learn about similarities and differences between themselves through positive images of the diversity of society and toys and equipment. Children know the difference between right and wrong. They are generally well behaved, they take turns and share happily but some times have a problem sitting and listening, especially after they have been sitting for quite long periods.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Children receive continuity of care because of the good relationship between their parents and the staff. Parents feel that the staff are supportive and approachable. Parents are given written information about the nursery and out of school club when their child starts. they also receive a monthly letter to keep them informed of necessary dates and other relevant information regarding the nursery. Staff have talked to parents about the Foundation Stage, early learning goals and stepping stones, but not all parents understand the importance of this. The children's records are freely available for parents to look at, at any time, but there are no formal arrangements where staff can discuss these records and ask parents for their input into of the next steps for their child. Yearly plans and the daily themed activity is displayed on the parents' notice board to keep them informed of some of the activities taking place in the nursery.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They know the difference between right and wrong. They are confident in themselves, they take turns and share easily. They are beginning to learn about themselves and others, and the world around them.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in a safe and secure environment. They have a good relationship with the staff who care them and have free access to a range of toys, equipment and play experiences. Systems are in place to ensure that staff caring for them are suitable to do so. The registration certificate and the public liability insurance are clearly displayed. The daily attendance records are completed twice daily and contain arrival and departure times. Most of the required records are in place and are shared with the parents however although there is a complaints policy, which is displayed on the parents' notice board, a complaints log book has not been put in place. There are effective policies and procedures in place to ensure children are safe and well cared for. There is a named member of staff with responsibility for special educational needs, but not a named member of staff with responsibility for either behaviour management or child protection as laid down in the National Standards.

Leadership and management is inadequate.

The nursery does not currently have a supervisor in role. This has been ongoing for several months and the position is being covered by two deputies sharing the supervisory tasks. The committee is very supportive of the nursery and the staff. They provide support for training and ensuring that there are always enough staff present to cover when staff are away on courses. Staff are not sound in their use of the Foundation Stage, early learning goals and stepping stones. Staff receive support from the Early Years Advisory Teacher.

Staff appraisals were carried out a year ago. when staff could identify their strengths and weaknesses and personal training needs. The groups' policy states that these should happen every six months. Staff meetings are held monthly to discuss daily issues and any concerns but there does not appear to be any clear assessment of the groups' strengths and weaknesses.

The setting does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group was asked -

to improve their knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals, use assessments to identify what children need to do next and to guide planning. Staff have had some training and receive support from an early years advisory teacher but

their knowledge of the early learning goals is not yet sound. Keyworkers keep children's records up to date and record the stepping stone a child has reached but are not identifying the next steps so there is no detail to lead the future planning.

to improve staff deployment and organisation of activities to challenge, question and support children. Staff deployment ensures that children are well supported at all times but the organisation of activities is sometimes random and not linked with planning or the early learning goals which can lead to more incidental than intentional learning.

to support children with special educational needs. the group has reviewed the special needs policy and there is a special educational needs co-ordinator in place.

to improve the management of children's behaviour. The behaviour management policy has been reviewed. Children's behaviour is generally good although they do find it hard to sit still for a long period of time.

to improve the leadership and management of the setting. This is an ongoing situation. There is no supervisor in position. This role is presently undertaken by two deputies sharing the role. they receive a high level of support from the committee.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received one complaint relating to -

Standard 1 - Suitable Person - staff not having the relevant qualifications for their position.

Standard 11 - Behaviour - Children's behaviour not being suitably managed

We requested the provider to investigate these concerns raised in September 2005 and from this we found there was no evidence to suggest that the National Standards have not been maintained therefore no further action will be taken.

The provision remains qualified for registration.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action

to improve.

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):

- ensure that staff are aware of the medical needs of all children and that they receive the correct training for any child with a specific medical requirement
- practice the fire drill regularly with all children so that they are aware of how to protect themselves in an emergency
- provide a named member of staff who is responsible for Behaviour Management and Child Protection, as required in the National Standards
- provide a complaints log which is available to parents on request

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that all staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, early learning goals and stepping stones
- ensure that planning is clear and detailed and that activities are clearly related to early learning goals
- review children's assessments and ensure that next steps are clearly identified, which lead the future planning
- provide children with more opportunities to extend their learning in communication language and literacy and mathematical development
- provide parents with more information regarding the Foundation Stage and more opportunities to meet with staff to discuss their child's progress and have an input into the next steps.

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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