

Cedars Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 23/03/2010
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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).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

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

Cedars Children's Centre was registered in 2009. It operates from a purpose built building in Harrow in the London Borough of Harrow. The centre is open Monday to Friday from 07.45am to 06.15pm and on Saturday from 08.30am to 12.30pm for 51 weeks of the year. They provide a breakfast club during term-time only from 07.45am to 08.40am and an after school club from 03.15pm to 06.00pm for children attending Cedars Manor and Shaftesbury schools. Children are escorted to and from Cedars Manor School by staff from the Breakfast and the After School Club. A Local Authority bus collects children and their carers from Shaftesbury school. Children can attend for a variety of sessions and have access to an enclosed outdoor area. Activities for children and their parents are held during the school holidays at the centre.

The centre is registered to care for a maximum of 25 children at any one time, of these no more than eight may be in the early years age range. The centre is registered on the Early Years Register, and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. They receive support from a local authority qualified teacher.

The Breakfast Club employs three members of staff, most are employed within Cedars school. The After School Club employs five members of staff, including the manager. Most staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and one staff member is due to commence early years training. A cleaner is also employed.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Staff are warm and caring, ensuring children's safety within the setting. They have sufficient understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how to implement it so that children make appropriate progress. The environment and the resources are a key strength of the provision and inclusion is effectively promoted. Staff are beginning to gather information about children's starting points to ensure welfare needs are met. Systems to reflect on practice to ensure continuous improvement are in the development stage.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- plan appropriate play and learning experiences based on children's interests and needs and develop systems to ensure that independence, challenges and ongoing observational assessment are used to inform planning for each child's continuing development through play-based activities
- continue to develop partnerships with schools that children attend so that their needs are identified with particular reference to settling in periods and

review systems to ensure children are helped in the transition from one setting to another

- develop systems to share information with parents with particular reference to awareness of their children's assigned key worker and the progress children are making
- review the culture of reflective practice so that it includes children's views and that of their parents or carers and use this to identify the setting's strengths and priorities for development that will improve the quality of provision for all children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The staff have a sound understanding of their responsibility in safeguarding children. Staff are familiar with the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child in their care. The accessibility of policies and documentations to refer to if necessary are currently under review so that staff are easily able to access this information. All staff working in the children's centre have undergone a Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) check to ensure their suitability. Recruitment and induction are good and ensure staff are aware of their role and duties. All staff have opportunities for training and promotion, which is encouraged and supported. Regular appraisals and one-to-one meetings assess staff's training needs and their ongoing suitability. The manager has been in post for a short period and is effectively supported by the manager from the children's centre. They have a clear vision about the development of the provision and are very keen to provide a good service. Monitoring of the breakfast and after school club takes place through discussions within the teams, who are able to contribute to the centres overall self-evaluation. Although views of parents and children are welcome, this is not yet used to ensure outcomes for children are monitored and improved.

Staff have a warm relationship with parents, daily discussions take place at drop off and collection times. Information provided to parents is under review, such as the development of a notice board. The introduction of a questionnaire has enabled staff to know children's starting points and interests. This document has been recently developed so that further useful information can be gained. The current system is not yet incorporated into planning so that children's interests are used to extend and support their continuous learning and development. A key worker system is in operation. However, parents and children are not familiar with who their key workers are or the benefits this system can bring, such as secure settling in procedures. Relationships with others delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage are beginning to evolve so that the needs of individual children are clearly known. There are plans to build on the partnership working within the children's centre.

The environment is bright, welcoming and very well cared for. The security of the premises contributes effectively to the children feeling safe. The procedures for arrival and departure ensure children are handed over safely to a known adult. Staff are well-deployed to ensure sufficient support. Regular risk assessments ensure all areas are safe for children. Resources are of high quality and are able to

support children's learning and development. Staff take time to ensure favourite items are set up for the children prior to their arrival. A wide range of further interesting resources are available in the storage cupboard, children also have access to the broad range of equipment in the pre-school room. Effective layout of furniture ensures that the indoor environment is inclusive for all children.

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

Children have friendly relationships with the staff, who are good role models and interested in what the children say and do. Staff employ various strategies to ensure children learn to behave in ways that promote their own and others' welfare. On the day of inspection children were extremely polite to their visitors. Equality and diversity is actively promoted through a range of strategies, such as the invitation to all families to join their children in meeting exotic animals. Photographs show children from various backgrounds playing happily together. This helps them to learn about the society they live in. Any negative issues, such as bullying, are appropriately addressed so that children learn right from wrong. The setting, along with key staff in the children's centre, have identified where further improvements can be made to overcome variations in children's achievements and are in the process of implementing these ideas.

Deployment of staff is good and children are well-supervised, which ensures their safety, both indoors and out. Staff have sufficient understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, and are keen to develop their knowledge further. They have started to carry out observations and assessments of children's needs during their play. However, assessment does not always identify children's next steps for learning, and plans are not yet based on children's interests and individual needs. Children take part in a balanced range of adult and child-led activities to appropriately promote their development and learning. Activities are mainly set out for the children prior to their arrival and they make choices about what they wish to engage in from the activities on offer. However, children are not challenged to reach their full potential as they are not always aware of the further resources available to them from the stock cupboard. This means that opportunities to promote their independence are under developed. Children competently handle small tools whilst decorating pictures of Easter eggs, they proudly show adults and their friends their finished project which promotes their self-esteem. They have daily access to computers and the outdoor area where they practice their physical skills. Staff value conversation and chat casually with children during snacks and activities. Children use their imagination when playing in the pre-school room. They enjoy 'cooking' meals for their friends and visitors. Staff display children's detailed clay models on a dedicated table showing how they value individual contributions. Books are easily available and they enjoy stories being read to them.

Healthy and nutritious meals and snacks are offered and hot options are always available. Fresh drinking water is also available. Varied sized chairs means that children of various ages can be sociable together as they enjoy their breakfast and tea-time. Staff are aware of any health and dietary needs. Children follow

appropriate personal hygiene routines, such as washing their hands prior to eating. A detailed two-way conversation between staff and children help them to understand the importance of healthy eating. The discussion includes the benefits of the various components of food, such as protein and carbohydrate, and the benefits these bring to our bodies. As a result, children are provided with appropriate opportunities to participate in meaningful speaking and listening activities.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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