



## **Blackwater Leisure Centre**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY260441
<b>Inspection date</b>	07 June 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Anne Daly
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<b>Registered person</b>	Leisure Connection Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	Crèche

## 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Blackwater Leisure Centre Crèche is one of 30 crèches run by Leisure Connection Ltd. It opened in 2003 and operates from one room in the leisure centre situated in Maldon, Essex. A maximum of seven children may attend the crèche at any one time. The crèche is open from 09:30 to 14:30 on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and from 09:00 to 14:00 on Tuesdays.

There are currently 225 children aged from 0 to under 5 years on roll. Children come from a wide catchment area and attend while their parents use the leisure centre.

The crèche employs four staff. Three of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about good health and hygiene from staff who are secure in their knowledge of appropriate procedures. Their support and guidance helps children to become increasingly independent in their personal care.

Parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is requested on registration forms. Although staff working in the crèche do not currently have a first aid box in the setting or hold first aid certificates, a clear process is in place to contact trained leisure centre staff who are able to respond immediately they are contacted.

Toddlers and older children are provided with regular drinks and biscuits. However, they are not given the opportunity to select healthy options unless parents provide them. Staff consult parents about young babies' individual feeding routines to ensure continuity of care. Children are protected from eating food which may cause allergic reactions as parents are asked not to include foods such as eggs or peanuts in the packed lunches they provide.

Younger children are helped and appropriately supported by staff who use the Birth to Three Matters Framework to inform and improve their practice.

Children rest and sleep according to their individual needs; if they do not need to sleep when others do, they are provided with alternative activities.

Opportunities for children to develop physical skills are provided and children enjoy using the slide, balls and bean bags as well as drawing, painting and playing with plasticine or play-dough. Younger children are able, with the support of staff, to develop new skills, such as grasping a toy.

### **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, where risks are identified and positive steps taken to reduce potential hazards, such as fitting safety catches to cupboard doors. Children can therefore move around safely, freely and independently. Children are allowed freedom within safe limits, depending on their ages, as staff understand how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits.

Children are shown how to safely use equipment and to avoid accidents, such as the correct way to carry and handle scissors.

Staff are aware of the need to safeguard children and to implement appropriate procedures if they have concerns about a child's safety. However, the procedures do not include contact details for the child protection agencies.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are presented with a varied range of pre-prepared indoor activities when they arrive. Their individual needs are met well as staff change the activities, having considered the requirements of the children attending the hourly session. Children's growing independence and motivation are effectively fostered and encouraged through the provision of activities to meet individual interests and through staff awareness to listen and respond. They know that some children enjoy writing and others prefer numbers and counting. Older children are challenged to extend their skills when writing; for example writing family names and then copying staff name badges.

Toddlers enjoy sensory experiences such as mark making with their fingers and using cutters in plasticine. Babies are held physically close and staff make eye contact to encourage early conversations between them. Older children are made to think about tasks through skilful questioning; for example by asking how many eyes on a lace card animal. Children are developing positive relationships with regular staff and increasing their confidence, as they receive regular encouragement and praise.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are forming relationships with staff and others. They are supported by staff encouraging all children to gain confidence. A varied range of resources and activities helps children to gain an awareness of people from other cultures and with differing needs.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Their needs are well met because normal daily routines are discussed with parents and staff understand the need to follow them for consistency. Children's comforters are accepted to help the move between home and the crèche. For example, by sensitively placing a toy comfort animal on the mat to 'watch', the child is reassured.

Children behave well and have a good awareness of the boundaries and expectations within the crèche, for example by knowing to sit when eating or drinking. Staff respond in a positive way to children and reinforce good behaviour with plenty of praise.

Children benefit from staff building positive partnerships with parents. Children and parents are greeted by staff and younger children are reassured when saying goodbye to parents to help develop a trusting three-way relationship.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from qualified and skilled staff settling them into the crèche. The high staff/child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play. It ensures security for the constantly changing groups of children and provides suitable contingency arrangements to cover staff absences.

The room is well organised and laid out to provide non mobile children with a safe area in which to play and rest. All legally required documentation contributes to children's health, safety and well being. However, not all policies and procedures are shared with parents.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children that currently attend.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection, the registered provider has developed records, policies and procedures to improve the organisation in emergency situations and ensure that vetted staff can act in children's best interest at all times. A screened baby area, baby bouncer chairs and bean bags enable children to rest and sleep according to individual needs while other children remain active.

Children access improved resources and activities to help them learn about diversity and to show positive images of themselves and others, such as multi cultural puzzles, books and dolls.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

There are no complaints to report.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE**

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.

## **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 children have ready access to fresh drinking water and consider providing healthy and nutritious snacks
- review and update the child protection statement to include contact details and telephone numbers for the local Police and Social Services
- share with parents all of the crèche's policies and procedures to ensure that they are aware of the organisation of the setting.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)