

Starting Point Childcare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY413041
Inspection date	14/12/2010
Inspector	Sarah Rhodes
Setting address	South Cheshire College, Danebank Avenue, CREWE, CW2 8AB
Telephone number	01270 654 655
Email	sam-hart@s-cheshire.ac.uk
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Starting Point Childcare Centre has operated since 1994 and was registered into new premises in 2010. The setting is privately owned by the college and operates from a purpose built centre situated on the campus of South Cheshire College, Crewe, Cheshire. Children are cared for within five rooms all accessible on the ground floor. There are secure areas available for outdoor play. A maximum of 69 children aged up to eight years may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open five days a week from 8.15am to 6pm all year round, with the exception of bank holidays and Christmas. The nursery provides a facility for college staff and students as well as the local community.

There are currently 114 children on roll aged from six weeks to 11 years. Of these, 92 are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting receives funding for nursery education. The care offered to children aged over five years is registered by Ofsted on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting supports a number children with special educational needs and disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 20 members of staff including the manager. The manager is qualified to Level 4 in early years and 17 staff are qualified to Level 3. Two staff are qualified to Level 2. One staff member is a modern apprentice and is working towards a qualification. In addition, the setting employs cleaning and maintenance staff. The setting receives support from the local authority early years advisory team.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery provides relaxed and purposeful play in a bright and spacious new build environment. A clear and supportive management structure ensures staff's ongoing development is a priority. The staff have a good knowledge of all the children and are quick to support children with additional needs. The development files in which staff carefully chronicle the children's development are not often seen or contributed to by parents. Staff have made many alterations and improvements since moving into their new building, but currently self-evaluation is not used as a tool to drive structured improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop the use of self-evaluation to drive continuous improvement and involve staff in the process
- develop assessment records to show the next steps in children's learning

more clearly and share these records more actively with parents to gain their input

- forge links with others who provide Early Years Foundation Stage provision for the children to gain information to assist in the assessment and planning for the children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded through a clear management structure which ensures staff understand their responsibilities and lines of support for the work they do. A written safeguarding procedure is in place and all staff attend safeguarding training. This ensures that staff are up-to-date with current local safeguarding procedures so any concerns about children in their care can be addressed promptly. Appropriate recruitment procedures ensure staffs suitability is established. Induction and ongoing appraisals support the manager in establishing that staff have good knowledge of the policies and identify any training requirements. The building and grounds are safe and secure and staff manage the entry of parents and visitors. Staff have a clear understanding of risks within and outside of the building and written risk assessments for the building, grounds and any outings are completed and reviewed regularly.

Required policies and procedures are in place to help with the safe and smooth management of the setting. The senior management team has introduced a number of different systems to help review practice and set goals for some areas, for example, the outside play area and the introduction of free flow play between inside and outside spaces for all children. Staff have been involved in making changes and improvements following the recent move into the new building. Currently a full self-evaluation is yet to be undertaken by the whole staff team to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement in a structured way. This means staff are less clear about how they are involved in self-evaluation and how it can drive improvement.

Parent partnerships are strong and parents are made very welcome. They are encouraged to talk to staff on an ongoing basis and offer suggestions or share concerns. Policies are shared with parents and they are encouraged to spend time with their child in the group to settle them in. Newsletters and parent boards keep parents up-to-date with latest events and how they can support their child's development. For example, the 'Every Child a Talker' board gives helpful hints on encouraging communication between children and adults. Parents are given access to their child's development files but only a minority access them and no system is in place to encourage parents input into these files to develop a rounded picture of children's development. Partnerships in the wider context are used to develop the quality of education and care. Links with other professionals are used to gain ideas about best practice and information on how best to help children with additional needs. Links with the college community help parents and children with English as an additional language and make staff development and training a priority. The nursery has only limited links with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage to the children who attend the nursery, to assist them in

providing continuity of care and gaining a full picture of the child's development. They do however, successfully link with schools to develop a smooth transition for children from the nursery into reception classes.

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

The nursery promotes children's learning, development and welfare very well. The staff have a secure knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They demonstrate a good understanding of their planning and assessment processes. Staff are motivated to ensure that children's play is driven from their interests, engaging with parents to find out more about their interests at home by, for example, having a simple wall of cards parents can fill in to pass on significant interests or exciting events. Staff constantly reflect and review activities to ensure children get the most out of them, adapting establish routines or the environment as required. Observations are documented, sometimes accompanied by photographs and placed in children's development files. These observations are categorised under the six areas of learning and the six areas age-related aspects. Staff review children's progress and use the categorisation to identify if any of the aspects of learning is missing and assess if they are making adequate age-appropriate progress towards the overarching early learning goals. They identify children who's progress is delayed and provide appropriate help in conjunction with parents and other professional. Next steps to enhance children's learning are planned by the key workers, however, these are rarely documented and rely on staff remembering them when planning activities. Parents are informed about the observation files but only a limited number actually revue them or make comments and provide further information to be included on children's progress at home.

Staff use routines and activities to help children learn. For example, children's independence is encouraged through mealtimes when older children can serve themselves from serving bowls. Staff take advantage of the easy access to a secure outside play space to use the outside area as a learning environment with a free flow for older children from inside to outside. The children enjoy typical outdoor physical activities such as riding bikes and climbing. There are also facilities to enable children to play with table top activities outside and care for plants when the weather improves. The children are confident and well engaged in the activities. They are making good progress in their communication language and literacy skills. They enjoy singing and have opportunities to talk with staff and each other in small groups which makes them confident and articulate speakers. Staff are not afraid to use complex words with appropriate explanations to expand children's vocabulary, for example, children understand about where the rice in their meals grows. All have easy access to books. Children are making progress in their understanding of number, shape and size and enjoy using their knowledge in a variety of activities, for example, when playing board games. Children are introduced to other cultures through activities based around major festivals and a range of meals with influences from around the world. Children have ready access to computers, cameras and other programmable and push button toys.

A healthy range of appealing snacks and meals are provided and the cook takes

special care to review menus to ensure they are nutritious and reflect the seasons of the year. Good hygiene practices are introduced to children through everyday routines and they confidently wash their hands in the accessible bathroom areas. Children are shown how to keep themselves safe through clear rules which are carefully explained, for example, how to use a new snow like digging medium. Staff manage the children's behaviour in a very positive way praising the children and keeping them well occupied. They use visual cards to remind children of the rules around, for example, not kicking and being kind to each other. The staff are confident in their ability to provide a tailored service for all children including those with additional needs. They speak to parents or other professionals when required. Gaining advice on any adaptations to the building or their care for children with learning difficulties or physical disabilities to ensure each child has appropriate care and activities. One-to-one staffing is introduced where this is required to support a child. Children are making good progress in developing skills for the future and the move to school when the time comes.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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