

# Highbridge Childrens Centre

7 Coronation Road, Highbridge, Somerset, TA9 3JD

## Inspection date

12/08/2013

Previous inspection date

07/03/2011

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

**This inspection:**

4

Previous inspection:

1

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 4

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 4

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 4

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is inadequate

- Staff are not deployed effectively. As a result children are not properly supervised or kept safe and their needs are not met.
- The key person system is not effective. Children are not supported by a familiar adult and relationships with parents are often poor, which compromises children's emotional well-being.
- The register is not accurately maintained to reflect the number of children present.
- Insufficient action has been taken to address identified risks, which means that children are at risk from harm.
- Partnerships with parents are weak. Communication is limited and parents do not feel well informed about their child.

### It has the following strengths

- Children enjoy a range of activities that help them develop their physical skills.
- Small group sessions help children to develop confidence in their communication and language.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Inspection activities

- The inspectors observed activities in the playrooms and outside area.
- The inspectors had discussions with managers, staff, children and parents.
- The lead inspector undertook a joint observation with the nursery manager.
- The inspectors sampled a range of documentation, including children's records, safeguarding procedures, staff suitability checks, policies and procedures.
- The inspectors took account of parents spoken to on the day.

## Inspector

Michelle Tuck and Rachael Williams

## **Full Report**

### **Information about the setting**

Highbridge Children's Centre is run by Somerset County Council. It offers a variety of family support services including a children's nursery. It operates from a purpose-built building situated within the grounds of Churchfields School in Highbridge, Somerset. The nursery is open plan to incorporate three main areas, including a baby room, a sensory room, two kitchens, sleep room, toilet facilities and office.

The children have access to two secure outside play areas within the school grounds; one area is equipped with large play equipment and the other area, the nursery garden, is used for planting and forest school activities. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 8am to 5.45pm for 50 weeks of the year. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. There are currently 100 children on roll, all in the early years age range. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. There are 14 members of staff, of whom one has qualified teaching status, 10 hold an early years qualification at level 3 and three are working towards a qualification at level 3. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds.

### **What the setting needs to do to improve further**

**To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:**

- ensure staff are deployed effectively to meet children's needs, and to keep them safe
- improve the key person system to make sure that every child's care and education is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help each child form attachments, to build a relationship with the parent and to help children make consistent progress in their learning
- ensure the registration system provides an accurate record of children present
- improve the systems for the monitoring of identified risks in the environment to ensure they are consistently actioned to support children's safety
- improve partnerships with parents so that information is shared regularly to support children's learning and development.

**Inspection judgements****How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend**

The key person system does not work effectively to help children and their families form settled relationships with designated staff. Staff do not always work directly with their key children. The current key person 'buddy system' is ineffective as a back-up arrangement during the key person's absence. The result of this weakness is that children's care and learning needs are not met. Written processes state that when the key person is not present to support children and liaise with their parents, another named person is. In practice, however, the inspection identified that sometimes, such as at arrival and departure, none of the named staff are available. At these times, children and parents are admitted by administrative staff and cannot speak to those adults who should know them well, if they so wish. Similarly, at the end of the session, these staff are not always there to facilitate effective communications with parents. This means that important messages are not relayed, such as why a packed lunch has not been eaten. This weakness results in inconsistencies in the progress children make, particularly for those children under two years. Due to the ineffective key person system children, particularly babies, do not always make secure attachments. They do not have one special person who knows them well. Therefore, they are not progressing as well as they could do in their personal, social and emotional development in making relationships and developing their confidence.

Staff have a sound understanding of how children learn and develop. Home visits are

completed before children start at the nursery, which enables parents to share their child's starting points and interests. This helps the staff initially to plan specific activities to help children make progress across most areas of learning. However, although staff observe children engaged in activities and use their findings to plan for their next stages in learning, due to poor deployment of staff some children are left unsupported. This weakness affects both children's learning and safety. In the main nursery room one child was left unsupervised for ten minutes, which is a breach of requirements, and in the youngest ones' room, an accident occurred because of the lack of adequate supervision. In several areas, some children are not actively engaged owing to staff not being available to play with them and aid their progress, so they progress. These inconsistencies do not fully prepare children for school or the next stage in their learning.

Children develop their mathematical skills as they categorise shoes and sort them into pairs and sizes. They use words such as 'big' and 'small' to compare size. Children use their imaginations well. They describe how a shoe would fit a giant or a horse as they 'clip clop' and trot like one. Children also express their imaginations through arts and crafts; they have easy access to paints, pencils and clay and freely create individual artwork. This supports their independence. The nursery employs a resident artist who engages the children in various art projects, to extend their creative skills. Children use their senses to explore the environment. They enjoy feeling the flour move through their fingers as they pretend to make a cake. They talk about needing to add eggs if they were cooking the cakes and remind each other to wear an apron to keep their clothes clean.

Children listen well to a story. The member of staff uses her voice effectively to engage the children as they talk about the book's pictures and count the characters. Children have opportunities to learn about the natural environment. They visit the nursery garden where they take part in forest school activities, plant and tend to fruit and vegetables, and help to construct a 'greenhouse' from plastic bottles. Children develop their physical skills as they take part in a rugby skills session. Supported by the staff, they listen to instructions from the rugby coach and practise throwing the ball into a net. This provides them with new skills. Nevertheless, the weak partnership with some parents results in infrequent communication with them. This weakness means parents are encouraged to tell the key persons about their child's learning at home sufficiently often, so staff do not have a current all-round picture of each child's particular interests. Consequently, staff cannot use such information in planning to make sure activities are matched to each child's needs.

### **The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children**

There is a key person and buddy system in place at the nursery. However, this is not effective in developing children's sense of security and meeting their individual needs. This is because some children attend at different times to their key person and their 'buddy', so they are not fully supported to make secure attachments. Most parents know who the key people responsible for their children are, however some report that they do not see them very often and this results in poor communication. Consequently, parents are not fully

aware of what their child has done during day, and they are unsure how they can contribute to their child's learning at home.

Children have some opportunities to support their understanding of keeping themselves safe. For example, children help to tidy up and keep the floor free from hazards. However, insufficient action is taken to address identified risks. Due to poor supervision of children and ineffective deployment of staff children are not safe in all areas of the nursery. For example, in the area where the nursery computer is positioned, there are many trailing wires, which are a risk to children. As the learning environment is not as safe as it should be, children's safety is compromised when they explore their environment freely. The manager states she was aware of this issue and had identified it on the main risk assessment. As insufficient action has been taken to address the hazard, this shows the risk assessment system is not monitored sufficiently.

Children behave well. They play well with one another; they share, take turns and are kind to each other. Staff act as good role models to the children and successfully help them to manage their own behaviour as they talk to them about feelings.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles through discussion and the healthy snacks and meals provided. Learning is further enhanced by planting and tending to fruit and vegetables in the garden and taking part in a variety of outdoor play sessions, which promote children's physical development appropriately. For example, they use wheeled vehicles in the garden, which require cooperation with each other to manoeuvre around; they use crates to build towers and blow bubbles, which they chase around the garden. Children make their own choices from a suitable range of resources, both inside and outside, which encourages their independence. Children's emotional health and well-being are not adequately promoted. This is due to the ineffective key person system and the poor deployment of staff, so there is not always a member of staff available to children that they have securely bonded with to ensure children feel emotionally safe and secure.

### **The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision**

There are significant weaknesses in the leadership and management of the nursery. The management has failed to recognise the impact that the ineffective key person system is having on the children's learning and welfare. In addition, although required ratios are met throughout the nursery, the poor deployment of staff means that children's needs are not being effectively met. The nursery completes written risk assessments to identify hazards; however, management does not ensure all these identified risks are effectively removed. Consequently, children are not safe. Parents are asked to provide information about their children during the home visit. This includes sharing any details on allergies, care routines and learning points, so staff are aware of children's individual care needs and where they are in their learning. The nursery records all accidents and incidents and

shares this information with parents to keep them informed. There is a complaints procedure in place and the nursery deals with these appropriately and within the correct timescales.

Staff have a suitable knowledge of child protection issues and are aware of the correct reporting procedures should they have a concern about a child in their care. There are appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures in place to check the suitability of staff and staff are supported through supervision and appraisals. The manager has considered peer reviews and observations to improve practice but these have yet to be implemented; therefore, not all strengths and weakness in practice are being shared in order to drive improvement effectively.

The nursery manager does not monitor the educational programme effectively. Although observations of children are used to influence future planning, and the next steps in learning are evaluated, the partnership with parents is weak overall because communication with some parents is inconsistent. Parents coming into the nursery may obtain general information displayed on the notice board. Staff provide them with a termly summary of their child's progress and invite them to attend a parent consultation. Parents contribute photographs of family members and pets to their child's communication book. Nevertheless, some parents express dissatisfaction with the nursery and the key person system in particular. One parent said that sometimes her child's arrival is not acknowledged and she 'just hopes someone notices she is there'. Another parent states that sometimes important information is not communicated, such as why packed lunches are returned uneaten. These weaknesses affect the well-being and personal, social and emotional progress of some children.

Staff are not available to complete the register of children's attendance. This is a breach of the safeguarding and welfare requirements and puts children's safety and welfare at risk. Parents are encouraged to share their child's communication book with other settings they attend and the nursery share information through their parent sharing forms. Partnerships with other professionals helps to promote continuity of care and results in positive outcomes for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Currently only the nursery manager and the senior staff team complete the nursery's self-evaluation form, on a monthly basis. This has enabled them to identify some areas for improvement, such as looking at ways to improve children's mathematical development and how they can enhance outdoor learning opportunities and experiences. However, management has failed to identify and effectively address key areas of weakness within the nursery, such as staff deployment, supervision of the children and addressing identified hazards, which has a significant impact on the children's welfare and development.

## What inspection judgements mean

### Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.



## Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY274638
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	931713
<b>Type of provision</b>	Full-time provision
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	71
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	100
<b>Name of provider</b>	Somerset County Council
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	07/03/2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01278 780665

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## Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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