

25 October 2007

Ms Kathy Coates Mohammed
Manager
Martenscroft Nursery School and Sure
Start Children's Centre
33 Epping Street
Manchester
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Dear Ms Mohammed

Ofsted survey inspection programme - the impact of leadership and management in full day care on outcomes for children and their families

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during our visit on 17 October 2007.

As outlined in my initial letter, the visit had a particular focus on the links between leadership and management and outcomes for children and their families and looked at the recruitment and retention of staff, their qualifications and skills, and their roles in leadership and management.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing settings but individual settings will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with you, the deputy head, the assistant head (operations), other senior staff and staff in other roles. We looked at relevant paperwork including planning, some of the children's records, and your survey of parents' views. To follow up on some of the issues that you identified, we also observed the children and staff during various activities.

The overall effectiveness of the impact of leadership and management was judged to be outstanding.

The impact of leadership and management on outcomes for children and their families is outstanding.

- Babies' and children are exceptionally well cared for in terms of their physical, social and emotional needs. A tranquil atmosphere prevails as children settle to sleep, children's individual dietary needs are followed in consultation with parents, and children learn independence through daily activities.
- Children are exceptionally well stimulated and have very good continuity of care. They benefit from a high level of challenge, for example, younger ones

looked at why fruit have skins. Such quality teaching and learning are based on staffs' excellent knowledge of 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. Older nursery children achieve very well and benefit from a very rich and well planned day. Their outdoor learning is well supported but there is room to extend outdoor learning for the younger groups in the day care provision.

- All children progress exceptionally well and this is recorded effectively in their personal 'learning journeys' files. These capture children's learning and development through photographs and analysis and show their development in a way that parents enjoy sharing.
- Children's transitions are exceedingly well supported. Careful thought and clear processes help children and their families' right from their very first contacts with the centre, through to children's changes to different rooms and then their transition to school.

The impact of leadership and management on the quality of what the setting provides is outstanding.

- Resources are of excellent quality. Toys and materials are imaginatively presented and help to promote the stimulating experiences staff plan for children. These often follow the children's interests.
- An exceptional overall package of care and education is offered for all children and their families. Parents' views are actively sought and acted upon and provision is tailored to children's individual needs to provide a seamless experience for each one. Children are seen as unique and their individual needs are exceptionally well met.
- Other professionals, for example midwives and speech therapists use the facilities so children's and families needs are met in one welcoming place. Activities such as baby massage sessions, and the sensory room, are also available on site. These resources further support and enhance the provision for children and their families.
- Staff seek parents' views, take them seriously and adapt the provision accordingly wherever possible.
- Wrap around care is well organised and children's learning and development are well promoted and recorded during the nursery school's holiday periods.

The impact of leadership and management on inclusion is outstanding.

- Staff are passionate about including all children; this is evident throughout the centre in staff: child interactions and in the visual displays which celebrate cultural diversity.
- Children with special needs are exceptionally well supported through early identification and timely intervention.
- Potentially vulnerable children and their families are identified and extremely well supported through thoughtful nurturing.
- Looked after children's needs are given a high priority and the centre carefully keeps some money to support such children as there is no public funding available for them to attend day care in the period before they are eligible for nursery education.

The overall quality of leadership and management is outstanding.

- The senior management has a strong strategic view that is encapsulated in the centre's improvement plan. This provides clear links to national early years developments. There are detailed timescales, monitoring strategies and success criteria and the contents are carefully aimed at raising achievement overall and for specific identified groups.
- The centre is well supported by governors and by an advisory group who both act as 'critical friends' to proposed developments and more routine matters.
- Staff are empowered and exceptionally well motivated. They have a holistic view of children and their families' needs. They also strive to model a suitable work-life balance themselves.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- develop the outdoor provision for the babies and younger children so that it complements the indoor provision
- ensure both formal and informal monitoring observations of staff are recorded so that developments can be tracked over the long term.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop your provision for children and their families. Once again we would like to thank you and your staff for their help and cooperation in helping us with this survey.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to the Director of Children's Services in Manchester and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the inspector that carries out your next inspection.

Yours sincerely

Chris Marsh
Her Majesty's Inspector

