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29 September 2008

Mr Pettavel
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Dear Mr Pettavel

Ofsted survey inspection programme – The impact of wrap around care within children’s centres on children and families

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, children, parents and representatives from other groups, during our visit on 22 September 2008.

As outlined in my initial letter, the focus of the visit was on the impact of wrap around care on children and their parents and families.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the centres visited, but individual centres 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 we made included: interviews with service providers based in the centre and family annexe, interviews with parents, staff and the headteacher of a local primary school, scrutiny of relevant documentation, and observations of sessions with children in the centre and in the linked day-care provision.

The overall effectiveness of the impact of wrap around care on children and their parents and families was judged to be outstanding.

Achievement and standards

The impact of wrap around care on children’s achievement and standards and on parents’ achievements is outstanding.

- Children make exceptionally good progress irrespective of their starting points. This includes children from groups at risk of underachievement, such as looked after children and children from unsettled and disadvantaged home circumstances.

- Information from home visits is used well and ensures children get off to an excellent start.
- Children appear settled and are ready to learn, including those who lead difficult and disturbed home lives.
- Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. They thoroughly enjoy their experiences. Their physical development and well-being benefits significantly from indoor gym sessions and the high quality outdoor provision in the exciting garden.
- Children from 18 months in the linked day nursery (Harmony) and those with the associated childminders learn and develop extremely well because of the excellent stimulation they receive and the supportive environments that are provided.
- Children learn to control their behaviour and work through issues of a personal nature without the need for extrinsic rewards.
- Parents make excellent gains in their knowledge in the parenting classes and in the wide variety of other courses they are encouraged to attend.

Quality of provision

The range and quality of wrap around care is outstanding.

- The centre offers first class family services. The inclusion of a psychotherapist on the team, to support early intervention and the resolution of family difficulties, is typical of the centres excellent joined up thinking and preventive approach.
- The range of family learning is broad, from excellent classes supporting new mothers and developing parenting skills to those that help parents with employment related issues and/or the acquisition of better English language skills.
- Parents especially appreciate the sessions on establishing good sleep patterns for their children.
- The breakfast session gives children an excellent start to the day and enhances their social skills. There is also extensive and well attended provision during the school holidays; so the centre is fully used throughout the year.
- A bid has been won to develop a community kitchen to further assist the centre with work on health and nutrition. A further bid to involve secondary school pupils and the community more in the growing of healthy food has been made.
- The quality of inclusion and links with parents are outstanding. The level of staff training on child protection and inclusive practice is exceptionally good. Parents and children feel very welcome.
- Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are fully included and are carefully supported to achieve well and to be involved in everything that goes on.

Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.

- You provide inspiring leadership and are very effective in seeking out what can be done to support families.
- The centre has a harmonious and peaceful ethos. Parents from very diverse backgrounds are exceptionally pleased with the centre and the support they and their children receive.
- The centre's management is very successful in providing a very wide range of high quality activities for both parents and children.
- Leadership and management at all levels are exceptionally committed to self-evaluation and improvement.
- The monitoring of children's development and progress is exemplary, including the way their future achievement in a wide range of primary schools is tracked.
- Daily team meetings assist in identifying any child newly causing concern and prompt action is taken to further support the child and/or the family.

An area for improvement, which we discussed:

- ensure that the evaluations of family programmes and children's long term progress include details of ethnicity so the centre can check all groups gain access and are doing equally well.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop provision at your centre.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Mo Roberts
Her Majesty's Inspector