

Staffordshire Moorlands Childcare Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY277720
Inspection date	14/10/2008
Inspector	Valerie Thomas
Setting address	Highfield House, Albert Street, Biddulph, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST8 6DT
Telephone number	01782 297970
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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 report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

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.

Description of the setting

Staffordshire Moorlands Children's Centre in Biddulph, Staffordshire opened in 2005 and the Local Authority has responsibility for the setting. There are five rooms used to care for children with a specialised sensory room and separate outdoor play areas for the different age groups available. Access to the setting is suitable for everyone and there is a lift to enable all persons to access the first floor. There is a range of family services offered at the centre.

The setting is registered to care for 84 children up to eight years with the out of school facility caring for children up to 11 years. There are currently 84 children on roll who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Some of the children also attend schools and pre-schools in the local area. The Children's Centre is registered on the Early Years Register and the Childcare Register. The nursery is open each weekday all year round from 07.30 to 18.00.

The centre employs 48 staff of which 36 staff work with the children in the nursery and out of school club. All of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications to Level 2 or 3 and there is one staff with Early Years Professional Status and two staff with Qualified Teacher Status working with the children. Fifteen of the staff are working towards a further qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) have their individual needs met effectively. The environment is extremely welcoming and stimulating and there is an excellent range of resources available to help all children learn and develop. Procedures implemented to promote the health and safety of children are generally good. The management team has clear systems in place to identify the strengths and areas for improvement with action plans devised and implemented in order to promote better outcomes for children. Partnerships with parents are strong and the management are in the early stages of developing relationships with other settings in the local area.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities; this refers to behaviour management, fire evacuation procedures and sleeping arrangements
- implement a system to ensure the continuing suitability of all persons who work with children and make sure that there are clear systems in place to ascertain the suitability of supply staff
- continue with the plans to develop the partnerships with parents and other settings that children attend in order that they can contribute to children's progress and development

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Top priority is given to ensuring that staff understanding of safeguarding procedures is effective. The majority of the staff attend training which results in them having a detailed knowledge of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. This helps to ensure children are protected. The rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures make sure permanent staff are suitable to work with children. However, there are no clear systems to ensure the continuing suitability of staff. The nursery arrangements for checking the suitability of supply staff are not sufficiently robust, although the agency used, does complete appropriate checks. Detailed risk assessments are implemented and reviewed regularly which makes sure that the environment is safe and secure for children. Fire evacuation procedures are displayed in each room and these are discussed with each member of staff including supply staff although not all of them show a clear understanding of their responsibilities.

The setting has well-organised systems to monitor and evaluate the provision and there are clear targets for improvement in place. Action plans are formulated each year and regular management and staff meetings make sure that progress towards the targets is monitored. Actions taken following the recommendations made at the last inspection means that children's learning and welfare is better promoted. For example, training from a speech and language therapist on using open questions and from the School Improvement Division on story telling makes sure that opportunities for children to develop their imagination and problem solving skills are good.

Top priority is given to enhancing and improving staff's skills and knowledge. There is a very high level of qualified staff with good commitment given to helping staff achieve further qualifications and many short courses are attended.

Documentation is well-maintained. Detailed policies are in place and these are available for parents to view in the main entrance and parent welcome packs in each room. Additional leaflets and information on what the children's centre and local community offers are also displayed in the entrance. The staff have a strong relationship with parents and detailed information on routines is gathered to ensure individual needs are met. There is a daily exchange of information on the child's day at the nursery and many photographs displayed so that parents can see their child at play. Staff work in conjunction with other agencies to ensure individual needs of children are met and care plans are devised if appropriate. Support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very good and inclusion is very much promoted. Staff at the centre have helped to organise an 'Early Years Transition Network' for settings in the local area that deliver the EYFS. However, arrangements for individual children that currently attend more than one setting are not fully developed as yet.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are provided with exciting opportunities to help them make good progress across all areas of learning and development. Staff make effective use of the EYFS

documents to help them plan a wide range of activities and track children's progress. However, the planning is flexible, and staff use children's interests effectively. For example, they talk to individual children about the competition between the wind and sun in the story during outdoor play. Consequently, children are confident to express their thoughts and ideas. Detailed information is gathered from parents on their child's starting points and this, along with regular observations helps staff to plan effectively for children's individual needs. Further observations are made as children play and these are used to plan the next steps for each child although parents are not involved in setting these targets.

The environment is very well-organised to promote each child's independence and enable them to make decisions about their play. Resources are stored in low-level storage units with clearly labelled boxes which children can easily access. Behaviour is managed well by most staff although there are occasions when staff who are helping out, do not follow the expected procedures as detailed in the behaviour policy. Children benefit from the consistent praise they receive from staff as they play which helps to build their self-esteem effectively.

Staff enthusiasm and interaction helps children to develop very positive attitudes to learning and they are keen to take part in activities. They concentrate very well as they build intricate models with the construction kit and are happy to tell their friends what they have made. Young babies enjoy looking for toys under the blanket which develops their early reasoning and exploration skills while others like to listen to the tinkling sounds of the chime bars as they move them with their hands. In all rooms staff communicate very effectively with children and respond quickly to their needs. This results in children being confident to express their thoughts from babbling with young babies to telling their friends where they are going on holiday. All children join in with singing sessions, waving hello to each other and developing counting skills when they sing 'Five Currant Buns'.

The nursery operates an indoor/outdoor play approach to learning. The outdoor area is wonderful and offers exciting activities for children. They grow vegetables and fruit and collect rain water in plastic bottles. Children have lots of fun as they run around freely, climbing and crawling through equipment and banging on the big drums. They squeal with delight as they play 'What Time is it Mister Wolf' and count out five steps, ready to run away when it is dinner time. They freely express themselves through painting and drawing and have regular music sessions where they can dance. Varied activities and resources help children to develop their understanding of the wider world and diversity.

Generally, there are clear routines and procedures which help children to be healthy and stay safe effectively. Staff consistently remind children to wash their hands after they have been to the toilet. However, the sleeping arrangements are not fully effective in preventing the spread of infection as some of the beds do not always have a protective sheet put on them for children to lie on. A very healthy and nutritional diet is provided and drinks of water are readily available for all children. Staff set clear boundaries for children to help them stay safe. When walking to school children wear fluorescent jackets and a walking bus system is operated with training provided for staff.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Good
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Good
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Good

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Good
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Good
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Good
How well are children safeguarded?	Good

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Good
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Good
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Good
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Good
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Good
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Good
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Good

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

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.