



Chelmsford YMCA Day Nursery Busy Feet & Cosy Toes

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	203765
Inspection date	06 April 2006
Inspector	Sandra Daniels
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Registered person	Chelmsford YMCA
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

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

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Chelmsford YMCA Day Nursery (Busy Feet and Cosy Toes) opened in 1993. It operates from three rooms within the YMCA building in Chelmsford, Essex. The nursery serves the local area and the wider community.

The nursery is registered to care for no more than 59 children under 5 years, not more than 29 of these may be under 2 years at any one time.

There are currently 57 children on roll including 22 funded 3- and 4-year-olds. Children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are supported.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round. Opening hours are from 07:30 until 18:00.

There are 17 staff working with the children, 10 of whom have early years qualifications to level 2 or 3. There are 11 members of staff currently undertaking training.

The nursery receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PSLA) and is a member of Essex Day Nurseries association (EDNA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in an environment where good hygiene practices are always maintained. Policies and procedures are followed in practice. Children wash their hands before eating and clean their teeth after meals, learning good tooth brushing skills. Staff apply agreed health procedures which ensure that the risk of cross infection is minimised and children's health is maintained. Older children manage their personal care needs well and are developing an understanding of things that may affect their health, such as germs, healthy foods and exercise.

Babies and children enjoy a variety of tastes and food during sociable meal times. The food is nutritious and includes a wide range of fruit and vegetables. Menus are based on a computer programme which ensures a healthy balance for all children. Children use meal times as an extension to their formal learning activities by discussing what they are eating and what foods are good for them. Fresh drinking water is freely available throughout the sessions and children can help themselves independently. There is a separate, quiet area for babies to sleep in cots and older children are also able to rest and relax in comfortable surroundings according to their individual needs. Staff pay particular attention to children's dietary requirements, ensuring all children's dietary needs and preferences are met.

Children enjoy opportunities to engage in physical activities. There is a small outside area, mainly used by the older children, where they have helped to plant bulbs and watch them grow. Indoor physical activities take place every day to promote children's physical development and co-ordination. For example, children confidently use the slide, climbing frame, hoops and balls. Staff ensure that children are taken out to local parks on a regular basis. They have access to a wide range of tools and equipment to promote their fine manipulative skills, such as the computer, scissors and puzzles.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are protected by good security procedures and access to the building is carefully controlled. Fire evacuation procedures are understood and practiced regularly so that practitioners can ensure that children are kept safe.

Everyone enjoys a stimulating and attractive environment which is well maintained. All areas are checked for hazards and risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly. Children learn to keep themselves safe in this spacious environment where they are able to move around safely and independently. They benefit from visits from local police officers who discuss issues such as road safety.

Practitioners have a good understanding of how to organise and use space effectively. They are vigilant about children's safety and children learn about safe practice, for example they recognise that throwing things may result in someone getting hurt.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because practitioners have a good knowledge of child protection issues, recognise their roles and responsibilities and know how to implement the group's child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies and children enjoy the wide range of well thought out activities each day. Babies experience warm relationships with key staff and are given plenty of cuddles. They enthusiastically explore various textured items and show an interest in low level pictures, toys and books. They are encouraged to crawl or walk to stimulating resources that are changed regularly to maintain their interest. Practitioners engage babies well when they are reading to them.

Activities are planned and staff are currently working on the implementation of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Toddlers increase their independence and are able to share their thoughts because staff are adept at supporting their attempts to explain their ideas. There are good levels of mutual respect between staff and children. Children chat amicably at snack and meal times. They learn to listen and know the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. Staff are skilled at setting and maintaining these boundaries. The daily programme is diverse and interesting, children take pride and enjoyment in what they do. Practitioners evaluate activities and new assessment and development records are in the process of being developed.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from a well-devised programme of activities based on the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage which helps to ensure they all make good progress towards the early learning goals. However, systems for finding out what new children know, understand and can do

need to be reviewed to ensure that staff are fully aware of a child's starting place before moving them on to the next steps of development. Children are confident in the surroundings and enthusiastically select toys and activities. They develop skills of independence and are eager to assist with daily tasks, for example, tidying up and helping to prepare snacks. Staff help children to reinforce their learning through play by encouraging a natural curiosity and using appropriate questioning and well-planned activities. Plans clearly identify how activities will be adapted to meet children's individual needs and abilities, ensuring that all children are appropriately challenged.

Children always have access to books which they enjoy sharing with adults and peers. They join in with familiar stories and anticipate what will happen next. Children are skilled speakers, using a range of vocabulary effectively to convey their experiences, both real and imaginary. They select from a range of tools to make marks and older children are able to write their names independently. Children are developing an awareness of letter shapes and sounds and benefit from seeing a range of print, including letters of the alphabet and labels, around the setting.

Children make good progress in mathematical development as they use numbers when counting and solving simple number problems such as addition and subtraction. They use appropriate language to describe and compare size and shape. Children have very good opportunities to find out about the natural world. They study plant and animal life and are able to describe their observations to others. They develop a good awareness of the uses of information technology in everyday life and are able to operate equipment such as the computer confidently and independently. Children speak with interest about their own lives and learn about the work of people in the community, such as police officers.

Children's physical skills are promoted through a variety of mediums, such as dance and music. They learn to recognise changes which occur to their bodies when they are active, such as an increased heartbeat. Their imaginations and free expression are given high regard through a range of activities such as playing musical instruments, singing, painting, role-play and craft activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children and their families, including those with special needs receive good support from practitioners, enabling them to develop and contribute to the life of the setting. They are warmly welcomed, helping them to feel happy and secure. Children enjoy participating in activities which promote their awareness of various cultures and festivals. They benefit from interesting and worthwhile play resources which promote positive images of diversity. Children have opportunities to learn about themselves, people in the community and the wider world through planned activities and trips out to local attractions. They gain a respect for themselves and others as they learn to value differences and similarities. Children feel a sense of belonging in the setting. They like to greet adults and peers and look forward to attending the group. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of children is good. Staff are pro-active in establishing and securing positive and effective links between home and nursery, ensuring that parents are actively involved with their child's learning. Parents are encouraged to follow children's daily activities and progress. They are informed about what is going on through notice boards in each room. Parents are helped to understand how their child learns and develops through play. Regular and constructive feedback is given to parents on their child's progress in the Foundation Stage and are supported in extending children's learning at home.

Parents receive detailed information on forthcoming events and activities in regular newsletters. This committed approach helps to ensure all children make good progress and allows parents to play a full part in their child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Robust systems are in place for recruitment and vetting of staff and there are many opportunities for further training and development, both professionally and personally. Staff continually evaluate their practice in order to ensure that children receive the best opportunities to flourish.

The highly experienced and skilled staff team use their knowledge very well to ensure that children make good progress in all areas of development. Practitioners demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the setting's policies and procedures and implement these most effectively in practice to ensure that children are kept safe and well.

The quality of the leadership and management of nursery education is good. The manager is committed to early years education and has developed a strong and enthusiastic staff team. They are motivated to encouraging children's achievements and this is demonstrated by the children's enthusiasm for, and involvement in, their learning. There is good recognition of individual staff skills within the team, resulting in confident, competent practitioners who are pro-active in ensuring an inclusive environment where every child matters. Children are well-supported and receive good quality care and education.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to devise a system for planning and implementing a suitable range of activities for children, which is appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs.

Outcomes for children are significantly enhanced as they benefit from an effective planning system and a broad variety of activities and experiences which ensure that they make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted received a complaint that raised concerns regarding staff to child ratios, lack of organisation, inadequate provision of food and lack of behaviour management.

A childcare inspector conducted an unannounced visit to the provision on 29 April 2004 to inspect against National Standards 2 (Organisation), 3 (Care, Learning and Play), 4 (Physical Environment), 6 (Safety), 7 (Health), 8 (Food and Drink), 11 (Behaviour), 12 (Working in partnership with parents and carers) and 14 (Documentation).

There was no evidence found to substantiate breaches of the National Standards however recommendations were set to improve upon existing practice as follows:

2 - Ensure that the Operational Plan works in practice, this refers to deputising staff being aware of the day to day issues of the nursery and location and content of the groups policies and procedures,

2 - Ensure the register clearly reflects of the arrival and departure times of children and staff, including staff movement around the building,

7 - Devise a way to formally record incidents,

12 - Record all concerns/complaints received by parents,

14 - Inform Ofsted of all staff changes as they occur.

The provider remains qualified for registration.

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.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should

take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to improve outcomes for children under 3 years by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review systems for initial assessments of what children know, understand and can do and use this when planning activities.

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