



## Shoebury Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY296575
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 July 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Patricia Mary Champion
<b>Setting Address</b>	Delaware Road, Shoeburyness, Essex, SS3 9NW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01702 291305
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Pre-School Learning Alliance
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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](http://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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Shoebury Children's Centre is one of a chain of neighbourhood nurseries run by the Pre-School Learning Alliance. It opened in 2005 and operates from 5 rooms within a purpose built two-storey premises situated in Shoeburyness. The nursery is located within walking distance of local schools, shops and the railway station. A maximum of 72 children aged under 8 years may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery opens 5 days a week all year round. Opening times are from 08:00 until 18:00. All

children share access to a secure, outdoor play area.

There are currently 47 children from 0 to 5 years on roll. Of these 7 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions or full day care. The nursery serves the local community and surrounding areas. The setting supports a small number of children who have special needs or who have English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 12 staff, of whom 9 of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are 2 staff working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from Southend SureStart.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because they are starting to understand the importance of good personal hygiene. They are cared for in a clean environment and there are clear health and hygiene policies and procedures in place. Nappy changing is undertaken in a caring and hygienic manner to protect children from the spread of infection. However, staff do not consistently ensure that children wash their hands before eating. Parents are kept fully informed of any accidents or incidents and staff hold up-to-date first aid certificates.

Children enjoy eating nutritious, freshly-cooked meals. Fruit is offered daily at snack times and drinking water is freely accessible to the children. The babies' dietary needs are met well, because staff work in partnership with parents, who supply their baby feeds. Although baby bottles are mostly stored in the fridge, at times when bottles are in use, they are not stored appropriately and teats are left uncovered.

Children enjoy energetic activities that provide opportunities to keep them fit and healthy. They look forward to going outdoors to play and spend time throwing and kicking balls, rolling hoops and hopping on stepping stones. Good use is made of indoor soft-play equipment and safety mats to allow children to jump, roll and move expressively. Children rest according to their needs. Staff recognise when babies are tired and allow them to sleep in comfort in cots or on sleeping mats with clean bedding. Sleeping babies are checked regularly.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and extremely comfortable environment. They move safely and freely within the rooms in the nursery. Regular risk assessment is undertaken and daily checks are made to minimise all potential hazards and risks to children. There are plans to fit alarms to some internal doors to alert staff if children exit the nursery and enter other areas of the children's centre. Staff are also

considering the best way to manage children's safety around the low-level window sills. Children use safe play equipment and furniture that is of good quality and well designed.

Children are protected as staff are extremely vigilant about their welfare and security. A touch pad entry system prevents unauthorised access to the premises. The reception desk is manned at all times and visitors to the premises are rigorously monitored. Children develop an awareness of their own personal safety as they practise evacuation procedures or talk to staff about potential hazards, such as discussing the best way to hold or carry scissors.

Children are safeguarded because staff comply with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee. Staff also keep up-to-date with child protection issues through training and by reading the recommended literature.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident to make their own choices about the activities and the games they play. A range of fun activities are provided for children of all ages. Babies use all their senses to explore movement and materials and enjoy playing with the treasure basket, heuristic play box and the bottle box. Children of all ages show great pleasure when playing with sand. Children are developing warm, trusting relationships with the staff, who encourage and promote their confidence, independence and social skills.

Staff are developing their awareness of the 'Birth to Three Matters' framework. However, they have not yet started planning activities for babies to link with the framework. Although developmental records are kept for the older children attending the nursery, the staff are not yet observing and recording the babies' progress and achievements.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff are developing their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage through training. The curriculum is planned to give children a broad range of experiences to make progress towards the early learning goals. Activities are mostly well-managed, but do not always sustain children's interest and at times they lack challenge for the older children. The staff are not always consistent in forming carefully structured questions that encourage children to think and demonstrate what they know.

Indoor space is used well, there are clearly defined areas to help children identify and choose their activities. Children really enjoy playing with water. They spend time exploring volume and capacity by carefully pouring water from jugs into containers. They investigate with great interest what happens when sand and water are mixed. Role play is extremely well-resourced and the children spend time imaginatively cooking dinner or serving tea. The older children independently access the computer. They use a mouse with confidence and select games to play. Children are using

scissors carefully and skilfully and have daily opportunities to paint or glue collages and pictures. Although children look forward to going outside to play, the staff are not making the best use of the outdoor area to maximise children's learning experiences.

Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. The staff observe and record the children's progress and achievements and are using their observations to plan the next steps for the children's play, learning and development.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery. They interact well with each other and are settled and confident with their carers. Children enjoy helping the staff tidy up or assist by carrying play items in from outside. The older children show care and concern for the younger children. Children mostly respond well to the staff's expectations for good behaviour. However, they become distracted when they lack stimulation or lose interest. Children are extremely proud of their surroundings and enjoy showing visitors around the nursery.

Children are valued as individuals and the staff work hard to build their self-esteem. They are starting to learn about the wider world and community. Festivals are celebrated and children have good access to a range of play resources such as puzzles, books and role play equipment, which show positive images of our diverse society. A system is in place to support children with any additional needs.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Staff encourage parents to share information with them and in turn ensure that parents are given good verbal feedback regarding what their child has been doing. Plenty of written information is provided on notice boards in each room and parents are given a welcome pack. The staff have plans to encourage parents to become more actively involved in their child's learning at home, by sharing information about planned themes and topics. All parents spoken to were happy with the care of their children and the progress the children made.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The new staff team is settling into the nursery. They are well-qualified and have plenty of opportunities to attend on-going training to keep up-to-date with current childcare issues and trends. There are clear procedures for recruitment and vetting new staff. Although all staff have been cleared through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), Ofsted is not notified promptly of staff changes. The effective adult-child ratios positively support children's care and learning and staff deployment is efficiently organised to cover holidays and sickness. However, registers do not always detail staff movement between rooms.

The required documentation for the safe day-to-day management of the nursery and to promote children's welfare and safety is in place. Policies and procedures meet the National Standards and staff are reviewing and updating the operational plan to create an effective working tool.

Leadership and management of the nursery is satisfactory. The manager and staff work efficiently as a team and have started meeting regularly to discuss planning and developments. The staff team are mostly motivated and committed to the improvement of care and education for all children. Although there is a system for staff appraisal, activities and day-to-day organisation are not yet monitored or evaluated to ensure the smooth running of the sessions for funded children.

The provision meets the needs of the children that attend.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable. This is the first inspection following registration.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

There are no complaints to report.

## **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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### **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):

- ensure that Ofsted is notified of any staff changes at the earliest opportunity
- ensure that the range of activities offered to babies is planned to meet their individual needs and to maximise their developmental opportunities. Consider the best way for staff to observe and record the babies' progress and achievements, for example by using 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):

- continue to develop staff's confidence in delivering the curriculum so that they consistently use effective questioning that encourages interesting answers from the children and extends their vocabulary and language skills
- continue to develop the planning cycle to ensure that activities are adapted to challenge and support children to achieve as much as they can
- consider how the outdoor area can be used more effectively to enhance children's experiences in all areas of learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)