

Chapel Allerton Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	512561
Inspection date	30 April 2007
Inspector	Abigail Caroline Cunningham
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Registered person	Leeds City Council - Early Years Service
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Crèche

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?

Chapel Allerton Children's Centre is one of many nurseries run by Leeds City Council and opened in 1994. The children's centre operates from three rooms in a new one storey building on site at Technorth College, in the Chapel Allerton area of Leeds. The children have access to three outdoor play area's. The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 56 children from three months to five years. There are currently 57 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of these, 30 children receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The children's centre serves the local and surrounding areas and opens five days a week, all year round, except for bank holidays. Sessions are from 08.00 until 18.00. There are 17 part time/full time staff who work with the children, and 10 staff members hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two of the staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The team work closely with outside agencies and access services provided by the local authority, with the emphasis on learning through play.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Different methods for promoting personal hygiene are used. For example, there is liquid soap and individual flannels available for children to wash and dry their hands with. Staff wear gloves and aprons during nappy changing and the changing mat is cleaned after each use. Different coloured cloths are used for cleaning various areas and the children's bedding is washed on a daily basis, which prevents cross contamination. One member of staff has attended food hygiene training. Good arrangements are in place for administering first aid and medication. There are two fully stocked first aid kits available within the rooms and there are spare ones available in order to keep these ones fully stocked. Four of the staff hold a current first aid certificate and two members of staff are booked on to attend training. Written policies are in place regarding sickness, accidents and administration of medication; these are fully implemented and shared with all parents.

All staff are fully aware of children's individual dietary requirements and preferences, which are discussed in full with parents and catering staff. The children's lunch is prepared and cooked off the premises on site at a Leeds school and is transported in to the nursery. The catering agency that provides the meals checks that all meals have a low-salt and saturated-fat content. The children receive a good range of healthy and nutritious meals, such as roast turkey slices, gravy, potato wedges, carrots and cabbage. The nursery staff are not consulted in regards to the lunch menu, meals are rotated and the choice is often repetitive. Fresh fruit or vegetables, such as grapes, carrot and cucumber sticks are always available at snack time. The children have independent access to drinks at all times and babies are offered drinks regularly.

The staff treat meal times as an opportunity to help children enjoy their food and become independent in feeding themselves, as a result, young children have many opportunities to feed themselves using fingers, forks and spoons. The staff effectively recognise the signs of tiredness in babies and young children. They also support the children's independence in regards to potty training. They offer the children choices in terms of potties and small toilets. The staff encourage children of all ages to enjoy repetition in their movement, for example, there are movement areas in each room and each child has a movement journal. The children also enjoy sensory experiences, such as water play, painting and exploring natural materials.

The children have daily opportunities for fresh air and outdoor play, such as freely accessing the outdoor play areas. The children are able to play out in all weathers, for example, the setting has waterproof suits for the children to wear in wet weather. The staff have also put together boxes for various seasons, for the children to use a prompts in the outside play area. For example, the summer box contains items, such as flippers, goggles, watering cans and sunglasses. The children show an awareness of their own needs with regard to eating and hygiene, for example, a three-year-old asked the staff when it will be snack time. The children move in a range of ways, such as running and jumping. They can also adjust their speed to successfully avoid objects, for example, while playing on the tricycles. The children handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control, such as pencils, scissors and paintbrushes. They can manipulate objects easily and enjoy activities which promote this, such as threading.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The environment is warm and welcoming with good evidence of children's play and activity. Parents and children are warmly welcomed on arrival, children's work is attractively presented on the walls and some photographs of children are on display. The reception area is informative, for example, the settings registration certificate and useful leaflets for parents are on display. Each playroom has a parents notice board where information, such as the rooms planning and early closures are displayed for parents to view. Additionally, each child has an individual coat peg, container and message pocket.

Space is used constructively and activities are well organised. Toys and equipment are on low-shelves and carpeting and the children independently choose their own activities. Additionally, movement areas are currently being developed throughout the setting. All areas are well resourced with good quality products which are mostly made of natural materials, such as wooden furniture and toys. The children have direct access to the outdoor play areas from each of the playrooms and the children happily free-flow in and out. As a result, the children enjoy playing outside and spend a great deal of their time outdoors. There are plans in place to make improvements to all three outdoor play areas, to make them more inviting to children, for example, the setting would like to provide shaded areas. There are also plans in place to provide a pram store and storage for outside toys and equipment.

Children benefit from a good range of safety measures, for example, socket covers and safety gates are used. The children rehearse emergency evacuations at regular intervals. The outside play area is secure, which prevents unwanted visitors entering. The children are supervised at all times, are unable to leave the premises unattended and are never left alone with persons who have not been vetted. For example, while stay-and-play sessions are operating, parents and carers are supervised at all times and are only responsible for the care of their own children.

The system for managing access to the premises is extremely good, for example, a secure door entry system is in place. As a result, unauthorised persons are unable to gain entry and a record is kept of visitors. Children are protected from possible abuse or neglect as staff implement child protection procedures which are robust, fully understood and work in practice. For example, the staff are very experienced in working in partnership with social services. They are skilled at recognizing, recording and reporting concerns. All staff have completed child protection training and the settings child protection procedure is shared with parents. This includes what is to be done if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All the children are happy and settled. The staff recognise the children as individuals and meet their differing needs well. For example, the staff have a flexible approach to meeting children's needs. They implement individual routines for meal times, resting and nappy changing. Staff working with the younger children have attended 'Birth to three matters' training. They confidently implement the framework and the planning and assessment systems are very effective for this age group. Staff consistently talk to young children explaining what they are doing, which encourages children to link words with actions.

Babies' emotional needs are well met as they receive plenty of individual attention and cuddles, for example, while being bottle-fed. Children are made to feel special by key persons and

parents handing young babies directly to each other at the beginning and end of the day. Practitioners recognise that children need a predictable environment in which to feel safe and encourage independence. Staff are aware that changes in staff may affect the children's confidence. Within the setting each child has a key person and a significant other to look after them throughout the nursery day. The staff rota is organised so that there is always one of the child's main carers available to care for them. An effective procedure is in place to support children when moving to a different room, which includes settling in visits accompanied by the child's key person.

Plans provide a broad range of practical activities which develop children's knowledge and understanding. Activities are presented in an interesting and thoughtful way and all the children have good opportunities to be involved in messy and creative play, for example, while playing with the shredded paper. The staff encourage the children to try new activities, for example, digging in the mud in the outside play area. They are fully involved in activities, such as filling and emptying the water containers.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have attended training on the Foundation Stage and competently put this into practice. They show a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and provide a wide range of activities and experiences to cover all areas of children's learning. The activities provided are well matched to children's needs and interests, for example, the staff re-evaluate the planning on both a daily and a weekly basis. Detailed planning for focused activities ensures clear learning intentions are identified for children. Assessment records for each child clearly show the children's approach to learning, their achievements and their progress, and show planning for children's individual next steps in learning.

All children separate from their main carer with confidence. They initiate interactions with others and talk freely about their home and community. All the children independently select and carry out activities. Some children can dress and undress themselves, for example, a three-year-old took his shoes off and then put them back on after playing in the movement area. Some more-able children can link sounds to letters, for example, 'g' for granddad and 'curly c' for caterpillar. The children are beginning to recognise some familiar words, such as their own and others' names. They can also write recognisable letters and some more-able children can write their own name.

Three-year-old children are beginning to use mathematical language during play, for example, big and little. Children count with enthusiasm and many can do this past 10, for example, one three-year-old counted 12 objects. More-able children can recognise, name and write numerals from one to five. However, there are limited opportunities for children to solve simple mathematical problems and increase their independence skills, for example, during the lunchtime routine. Children are beginning to show an interest in aspects of nature. For example, a number of wasps circling the digging area evoked great curiosity. The children know how to operate simple equipment and can complete a simple programme on the computer using the mouse and the arrow keys. To extend the children's skills in information and communication technology, a smart board has recently been installed. The children show an interest in the way musical instruments sound. They engage in role play activities based on their own experiences, such as taking the dolls for a walk in the prams. Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals given their capability and starting points.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents have very good opportunities to share what they know about their child. This is done through regular discussions with staff, parents evenings and an effective settling-in procedure, which includes a home visit. Staff give good attention to meeting babies' individual needs for eating, changing and sleeping and exchange this information with parents, for example, through the use of daily diaries. Additionally parents' notice boards prominently display relevant information, such as information about the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Further information is available through the setting's policy file, which is easily accessible to parents. The parents receive clear information about the educational provision, for example, through regular newsletters. They are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning, for example, parents can add their comments and suggestions to the focus help sheets. Additionally, parents can stay and play with their children and can easily access their child's learning journal. However, the parents are not currently adding their comments to this document. The setting also supports children and parents with the transition from nursery to school. The staff support parents with school application and appeal forms. Prior to the child starting school, the staff visit the child's new school and take photographs of the environment and the class teacher. These photographs are used to make a the child a transition book. The staff then visit the child within their first term at their new school.

The staff are good role models; they create a secure atmosphere where children develop good attitudes and dispositions to learning. As a result, the children show excitement and are motivated to learn. The children are friendly and take a keen interest in visitors. They enjoy receiving rewards for their good behaviour, such as praise. The children understand what is expected of them because the staff are skilled in encouraging good behaviour. As a result, all the children are very well behaved, for example, some children use manners without being prompted to do so. Additionally, the children show care and concern for others and enjoy helping adults, for example, during tidy up time.

The staff team are experienced in identifying and working with children with learning difficulties and disabilities. As a result, the nursery has effective procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The staff team are committed to working in partnership with parents and outside agencies to ensure children receive good support. For example, regular meeting are held with parents and other agencies and individual education plans are fully implemented.

The setting benefit from having some staff that are bilingual, who can speak many different languages, such as French and Urdu. The children develop a positive attitude to others and a good understanding about the wider world and community. This is achieved through celebrating festivals, such as Eid. The children have access to a good range of resources which show positive images, such as empathy dolls, jigsaws, books, dressing up, cooking utensils and small world play figures. Children learn effectively about the local community through regular visits from the police. They confidently talk about features of their own lives, for example, starting school. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The Children's Centre Teacher works very much hands on with the staff and children to improve practice. Planning is thorough

and clearly reflects the continuous provision, the different areas of learning and responds to individual children's needs and interests. The curriculum and the children's progress is effectively monitored, ensuring that there is a balanced programme over time. Additionally, plans are regularly reviewed, for example, daily evaluations are undertaken and a weekly overview is also completed. The system is easy to follow, and all staff working with the funded children know how each part fits together.

The provision of additional services is a strength of the nursery. The setting have recently moved to a new building and most of the additional services are newly established. However, the setting has recently amalgamated with an existing crèche. As a result, good crèche facilities are available for parents. This enables parents to enrol on training courses that will help them develop skills to return to work, making a valuable economic contribution to the wider community. There is a varied selection of groups, involving parents and members of the local community to use during the day, such as a police drop in session. Good use is made of the expertise within the staff team, who work jointly with other professionals both within the centre and out in the local community. For example, the setting has close links with social services and also employs two community outreach workers.

The staff have created an orderly, friendly and calm environment in which to care for the children. Each session is planned for in advance and the staff are effectively deployed. Staffing ratios are consistently high and the children are given very good support. As a result, all the children are happy and settled. The staff work extremely well as a team; they are motivated and enthusiastic. They are fully involved in planning, evaluating and developing practice, for example, through staff meetings, planning meetings and supervisions. Staff have regular access to relevant training, for example, Foundation Stage, Makaton, domestic violence, child protection, first aid and 'Birth to three matters'. An established system is in place for staff, student and parent inductions. The registration system is effective and this clearly shows when staff, visitors and children are present. All the required documentation is in place, such as a complaints record. This information is easily accessible and stored securely. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last care and nursery education inspection the setting has improved safety, as empty electrical sockets are now fitted with socket covers. Partnership with parents has been strengthened as the operation plan is accessible to parents. Opportunities for children to use large construction materials and large equipment for physical development have been increased, for example, the setting has purchased steps and a tunnel.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. 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):

- make improvements to the menu, to ensure children are receiving a variety of meals
- continue to make improvements to the outdoor play areas.

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):

- use daily routines to improve children's independence and mathematical problem solving skills
- continue to strengthen partnership with parents, provide opportunities for parents to be able to add their comments to their child's learning journal.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk