

The Tudor Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	226900
Inspection date	14 September 2007
Inspector	Susan Andrews
Setting Address	The Tudor Centre, Bewcastle Grove, Mowmacre Hill, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE4 2JU
Telephone number	0116 2211771
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Registered person	Leicester City Council
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care, Out of School 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?

The Tudor Centre is one of several settings run by Leicester City Council. It operates from a single storey building with access to a small enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school/playgroup, 24 children may attend the out of school club and eight children may attend the crèche at any one time. The pre-school/playgroup is open each weekday during term time from 09:30 to 12:00 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and from 13:00 to 15:30 on Thursday. The out of school club runs from 15:30 to 17:30 on Monday and Tuesday during term time. The crèche operate at various times supporting parents who are accessing recreational activities and educational courses at the Tudor Centre.

There are currently 25 children aged from two to under five years on roll in the preschool/playgroup. Of these five receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local community on the Mowmaker Estate in Leicester City. Numbers of children attending in the crèche and the out of school club depends upon demand.

The Tudor Centre has experience of supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. The setting

employs four staff. The manager holds a teaching qualification and all staff hold appropriate Level 3 early years childcare qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and child-oriented environment. They are able to experience a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health, such as daily exercise and fresh air, using interesting and challenging toys and equipment that develop their physical skills. Children's personal health and hygiene is promoted well. They understand the importance of hand-washing after going to the toilet, messy play and before eating, to reduce the risk of cross-infection. Staff are good role models and generally follow effective health and hygiene procedures during daily routines. For example, they wash their own hands before preparing snacks, before cooking activities and they are vigilant in wiping down surfaces with antibacterial sprays before and after serving food.

Children's medical welfare is well promoted, as staff hold relevant first aid qualifications. They follow clear procedures and keep the required records regarding accidents and the administration of medication, although in some instances accident records lack sufficient detail. An appropriately equipped first aid box and bodily fluids disposal kit are readily available and therefore, staff are able to positively respond should a child in their care become unwell or have an accident whilst in their care.

Children are well nourished and enjoy a range of healthy, nutritious snacks which promotes their growth and development. For example, a variety of fruit and vegetables, such as grapes, pineapple, apples and cucumber are provided. Children have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating because they try new foods and textures and learn through a range of activities that develop children's understanding of what foods are good for them. Children choose from drinks of milk or water at set times during the sessions. If they are thirsty at other times, children help themselves to beakers and drinks from a water cooler. Staff are vigilant in ensuring children take extra fluids when the weather is hot or after physical exercise, therefore, children remain well-hydrated.

Children have wonderful opportunities to enjoy fresh air and exercise as they make good use of the enclosed outdoor area to challenge and develop their physical skills. Their balance and co-ordination is developing well and children ably run, jump and play freely. Children have a good sense of space as they competently manoeuvre and change direction when necessary as they move to music, use floating scarves, chase bubbles and ride on the bicycles and scooters. Children play safely and purposefully as they use a variety of tools, such as paintbrushes, crayons, scissors, craft materials, puzzles and threading toys. Therefore, they extend their skills and develop their fine muscle control.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play safely in a well-organised environment with clearly defined activity areas. Children benefit from the use of the adjacent outdoor play area which is safely enclosed. There is sufficient indoor space between each of the activities, so that the children are able to move around comfortably, engaging in quiet and creative activities. As a result, their choice,

independence and decision-making skills are promoted. Children have easy access to a varied range of safe and suitable furniture and equipment which is in good condition and checked regularly to reduce any potential hazards. Toys and resources are plentiful, varied and reflect diversity. They are age-appropriate and provide challenge, therefore, children develop their skills, are stimulated and interested in what is available.

Children's safety is prioritised. They are well protected from the risks of accidental injury, as staff are highly safety conscious. They take positive steps to plan for emergencies and to prevent and manage accidents, for example, through the use of a range of risk assessments which are regularly reviewed and daily safety checks. Although lacking in frequency, staff involve children in fire drills to evacuate the Tudor Centre, consequently, this helps children to develop an awareness of their own personal safety. Effective practices are in place, which actively contribute to keeping children safe and free from harm. For example, staff are extremely vigilant in the supervision of children and the security arrangements for the arrival and departure of children and their parents are extremely well-managed. Children are never left alone with people who have not been vetted or released to unauthorised adults, therefore, they remain safe and secure within the setting.

Staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues and reporting procedures. A child protection policy is in place which is made readily available to parents. However, this does not currently refer to the 'Local Safeguarding Children Board', or include procedures to be followed should a member of staff be accused of abuse, although staff are familiar with what must be done. Staff have attended additional training to extend their knowledge and skills, they are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and fully recognise their duty to protect the children in their care, therefore, children's welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the setting. They are confident, independent and are developing their self-esteem. They receive lots of support and encouragement from staff which helps children to feel good about themselves. They are cared for by keen and motivated staff, who know children well and give them lots of individual attention, therefore, children feel secure, welcomed and valued. Children are able to approach staff with ease and form close, trusting relationships.

Younger children's overall development is supported as staff have a clear understanding of how children learn. Staff are effectively implementing the 'Birth to three matters' framework and they provide a range of stimulating activities and spontaneous experiences to spark children's imagination. Baseline assessments are made to identify children's starting points and methods regarding observation, assessment and planning for children's individual development have been developed. Consequently, staff are able to build on what children are interested in, or need to do next to enhance their development.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have clear knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They are aware of how children learn and progress through the stepping stones, what the areas of learning include and they provide a range of exciting, innovative and inspiring activities. However, occasionally opportunities are lost when planning and evaluating the curriculum as these are not always focused sufficiently, to support children's learning in all

areas. As a result children's knowledge, understanding and skills are not robustly extended and regard is not always given to adapt activities to suit children who are at different stages of development, who progress at different rates or who have particular needs.

Staff are enthusiastic and are interested in what children do. Children have good opportunities to self-select toys equipment and activities and therefore, there is an excellent balance of child-initiated and adult-led learning opportunities with staff providing close support and encouragement to develop children's confidence and learning.

Younger children are beginning to participate in large group activities, such as the circle time and happily sing familiar songs. Older children listen well when staff are speaking and confidently answer any questions. Children are interested in their play and enjoy their time at the setting and have fun. They form good relationships with their peers and play well together. For example, building a train track together, pretending to make a cake, a cup of tea and take a doll for a walk in the role play area. Through effective organisation of resources and time, children have independent access to activities and can make choices and decisions about their play. Staff, although sometimes directive, generally manage children's behaviour well, so that they understand what is acceptable and how their behaviour affects others. Children work co-operatively with each other as they take turns, share, help to tidy away the toys and older children help the younger ones which gives them a sense of responsibility.

Children are developing their competencies well across the four aspects of communication, speaking, listening, reading and writing. Children's mark-making skills are fostered with a variety of materials available on a daily basis. For example, children use paintbrushes, crayons and trace letters on their art work with their fingers in adult led activities. However, opportunities to do this spontaneously as part of roll play, such as writing 'a shopping list' or 'a phone message' in the home corner are not always available. Younger children are beginning to enjoy listening to stories and older children respond well to questions as they confidently predict what might happen next. They have many opportunities to recognise their name, for example, children select their name cards when they arrive at the beginning of the sessions and include their name on their art-work. Labels depicting the activity areas, displays around the play room and the excellent range of books, further help children to recognise that words and text have meaning.

Children's mathematical development is encouraged on a daily basis. They are able to count confidently from one to 10 and learn to count further as they compare, sort and calculate when they use jigsaw puzzles, sing rhymes and see numbers in their environment. At snack time for example, children identify a large piece of pineapple or small grapes and in the home corner, they make comparisons, such as 'this big teddy is heavier than the little one'. Children calculate simple addition and subtraction when they count as part of the familiar songs as they sing 'one, two, three, four, five, once I caught a fish alive'. Children pretend to use the telephone daily in role play areas, enhancing mathematical development as they select and dial the numbers. They are making progress in using positional language, such as 'underneath' and 'above'.

Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them by investigating and exploring through first-hand experiences in an interesting environment. They are encouraged to listen and notice different features of their environment, for example, which direction the wind blows the bubbles. They have opportunities to observe, explore, question and be curious in a broad range of activities that form the foundation of later learning in history, geography, science and technology. For example, children learn to design and make things as they shape and assemble models, cut paper and join them together making collages. The setting embraces opportunities

to encourage children to value and learn about the wider community and they have access to a range of toys and resources that reflect diversity. Children begin to understand where they belong and fit into their families, for example, they talk about their older brother or a younger sister. Children develop a sense of time and place as they recall going on a trip to the seaside whilst on their holidays.

Children develop their physical skills and creativity through the use of a range of art materials and tools as they paint, crayon, use scissors to create collage pictures, model with play-dough and explore tactile experiences, such as sand, rice and lentils. Children use their imagination well to express their ideas and feelings in play situations that reflect their home and the wider community. They dress-up in the role play area and re-enact familiar life events, for example, going shopping with a dolly in a push chair or putting out a fire, dressed as a fire fighter. These often become group activities with children sharing the roles which encourages them to work co-operatively with each other and enhances their self-esteem. Children remember and sing familiar songs, they listen to, dance and move to a range of popular and classical music and use musical instruments to help them recognise differing tones, pitch and rhythms.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing firm relationships with adults and other children in the setting. Staff ensure children feel a sense of belonging as new children are sensitively supported, so that they settle well and become more confident. Staff liaise closely with parents and carers to ensure that children's individual needs can be met. The playgroup ensures there is no bias in their practice in relation to gender, culture or disability. The setting displays a real commitment to inclusion for all children and their families, encompassing children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and positively working with parents and other professionals to help children reach their full potential. Children have access to a range of resources, play opportunities and activities which reflect diversity and this helps children to begin to develop an understanding of the wider world and positively acknowledge cultural differences. However, the celebration of some multicultural festivals is limited. For example, religious festivals and celebrations, such as Ramadan and Rosh Hashanah are not routinely built into the planning of activities.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children behave really well in the setting. Staff manage behaviour in a positive way, by diverting children's attention, listening to them and praising their achievements. Staff assist children in their negotiations, in a calm, consistent and encouraging manner and are skilled in knowing when to assist the negotiations and when to hold back so that children can resolve problems themselves. However, staff, on occasions, do not give clear explanations about why children's behaviour is unacceptable or the likely consequences. For example, why it is unsafe for a child to stand on a chair. Children's self-esteem is enhanced by praise from staff, for example, staff positively acknowledge children when they are kind to each other. Children are beginning to understand what is expected of them as part of daily routines and are aware of the rules as they tidy away their toys and when they are asked to sit on the carpet at 'hello' and 'goodbye' times. This encourages them to work co-operatively with each other and adds to their sense of responsibility. Staff are polite to each other and to the children, always using 'please' and 'thank you' and encouraging children to do the same. As a result, children behave well and consequently harmony and co-operation is promoted.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Appropriate information, gathered at the time a child is placed at the setting, enables staff and parents to begin to work together in meeting

children's care and learning needs. Parents speak favourably of the welcoming environment which helps them feel confident in the care offered to their children. Parents feel they are listened to, their views taken into account and that staff are welcoming and approachable. A range of the setting's policy documentation is available for parents including a parent information booklet, 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage information. Staff take steps to build positive relationships with parents consulting them and seeking their views through the use of informal discussion and newsletters about the six areas of learning. Parents value the workshops that are arranged on a regular basis on topics, such as dental hygiene and storytelling. Records are kept for individual children and these are made available to parents upon request. Parents have access to general information which is displayed on the notice board, this includes details about the early years groups, special events, the local community and other day-to-day information, such as menus and health issues.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children receive a satisfactory level of care from qualified and experienced staff group. The operational plan has been devised and works in practice, although some documentation which contributes to the children's health, safety and well-being has been identified as requiring revision. Staff are generally familiar with the policies and procedures and of their duty to ensure compliance with National Standards. The implementation of the operational plan and the good practice of staff contributes to the promotion of children's achievements and ability to take an active part in the setting.

The deployment of staff is well-organised and the staff ratios and careful supervision of children promotes their well-being and safety. Younger children, particularly the new starters, benefit from the key worker system that provides additional support and reassurance.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. However, there is a lack of clarity regarding the registered body's role and responsibility to inform Ofsted of any significant changes or events. The staff induction system does not currently include information for new staff regarding the National Standards, the setting's conditions of registration or Ofsted's regulatory role.

An effective appraisal/supervision system to assess staff's competency and training needs is not implemented. Documentation in relation to policies and procedures to ensure they are reflected in practice is not routinely revised. Consequently, this may compromise the efficient and safe management of the provision.

The staff communicate appropriately with each other through informal discussion and regular planning meetings. The manager is keenly motivated and an effective leader. All staff embrace training opportunities and have good vision about how to provide an appropriate service to children and parents that meet their individual needs.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the setting agreed to provide basic information about the setting for parents. They also agreed to ensure children were provided with more frequent outdoor play opportunities.

The setting has taken positive steps to address both issues. A comprehensive set of information, policies and documentation is provided for parents at the time they place their child at the setting. Additional information is posted on the notice board regarding menus, health, childcare and developmental issues. Therefore, parents are kept involved and fully informed. Opportunities are created for children to play with a variety of toys, equipment and activities in the outdoor enclosed play area on a daily basis. Therefore, children's health and physical development benefit from the fresh air and exercise.

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.

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 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):

- develop systems to ensure the registered body is familiar with their role and responsibility to inform Ofsted of any significant changes or events
- implement effective systems to assess staff's competency and training needs and review documentation in relation to policies and procedures to ensure they are reflected in practice.

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):

- revise the planning and evaluation of nursery education to ensure that activities are more effectively focused to support children's learning in all areas, so that their knowledge, understanding and skills can be more robustly extended
- take further steps to adapt activities to suit children who are at different stages of development, who progress at different rates or who have particular needs to encourage their sustained and independent learning.

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