

Children's Centre at Yeovil College

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142870
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Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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

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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 Children's Centre was established in 1985 and has been extended to accommodate children for full day care. The nursery is owned by Yeovil College and operates from a converted bungalow in the college grounds. The accommodation has many rooms including an office, a pre-school room with its own toilet facilities, a toddler room and a room specifically for babies. There is a dedicated bathroom for babies and toddlers, which has nappy changing facilities included. There is a kitchen on the premises where meals are prepared and cooked for the children. There is a fully enclosed outside area for play, and dedicated garden areas designed by the children, one of these is used by the children to grow vegetables.

Children attend from Yeovil and surrounding towns and villages. There are currently 79 children on roll under five years. This includes 29 children that are in receipt of government funding for three and four-year-olds. The setting does support children with language and learning difficulties and has close links with other professionals to help support this.

The Children's Centre is open from 08:00 to 18:00 all year round with the exception of public holidays and the period between Christmas and the New Year. The centre may also close for some development training days for staff.

There are ten permanent members of staff who all hold relevant qualifications in child care including NNEB and NVQ certificates. The nursery is a member of the Somerset Nurseries Association, and is supported by advisors from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

From an early age children are developing an understanding of maintaining their personal hygiene. The younger children and babies have their hands wiped before meals and snacks with their own separate face cloths. Children learn about managing their own personal hygiene, through regular hand washing in all areas of the setting and the pre-school children cleaning their teeth after meals. They are learning about good hand washing routines, as they use liquid soap, and wash their hands in sinks which are situated at the children's level so they are easy to reach. Paper towels are provided to use for hand drying. Staff supervise children with hand washing and teeth brushing to ensure they are cleaned properly. Some children take responsibility for their own health and the health of others as they cover their mouths when they cough and find tissues for their runny noses. Staff set good examples for maintaining hygiene in their behaviour. They help to prevent the spread of infection through carrying out effective cleaning routines within the setting, such as using different coloured cloths for different cleaning duties and ensuring tables are cleaned before and after meals and snacks. They ensure suitable nappy changing procedures are followed, wearing gloves and disposing of wet and soiled nappies appropriately. Staff from the baby room ensure that the babies have their own separate bed linen, which is regularly laundered.

Staff have a good knowledge of first aid, which ensures medical needs can be dealt with effectively. All documentation and records are kept up to date regarding children's health, medical and dietary needs, to ensure they are cared for according to their individual needs. The manager ensures that staff's training in first aid is maintained. There is a first aid box available to use, however the contents have not been suitably checked in line with the guidelines from current training, and some of the contents have reached their expiry date.

Children's individual dietary needs are known to staff and managed effectively. The children are developing an understanding of healthy eating. Each day the older children enjoy freshly prepared nutritious meals which are cooked on the premises from locally sourced produce. The balanced menu and home cooked meals help children to benefit from a healthy lifestyle. Children enjoy the jacket potatoes with cheese and beans that they have for lunch, and the apple crumble and custard which they have for pudding. They are provided with suitable utensils and are adept at feeding themselves. Healthy snacks are provided each day which could be crackers or a selection of fresh fruits. The children in the pre-school room however are not provided with plates to put their snack on, which means some children place it and eat it straight from the table. Most children have milk to drink at meal and snack times, and additional drinks of water are available to the children if they are thirsty. Parents provide meals for the younger children aged under one year, which are stored appropriately and reheated as necessary.

The daily routines allow the children to participate in regular outdoor physical play; where they benefit from fresh air and are challenged to develop their gross motor skills. They run, jump, pedal bikes and use ride on toys, parking the bikes in the chalked parking bays on the playground.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

A welcoming environment is provided for children and parents. The rooms are attractive and stimulating for the children, with their artwork and photographs of them at play displayed around the rooms. The children are cared for in a safe and secure setting. The staff are well deployed within the setting and appropriate adult to child ratios are maintained. This helps to ensure the children's close supervision and their safety and well-being is suitably protected. The door to the nursery remains locked while children are present. Parents and visitors ring the bell to gain entry and identity is checked of all persons not known to nursery staff.

The indoor play space is organised well, creating a child friendly environment which enables the children to experience a good range of play opportunities. The children are grouped according to age and each group have their own room. In these rooms, children have sufficient space to move about and enjoy the activities safely, allowing the children some appropriate independence under adult supervision. In all the rooms children have free access to select resources that they wish to use. In the baby room toys are stored on low shelves that the children can easily reach if crawling or walking. Children in the toddler and pre-school rooms choose from resources like role-play, books and games, making decisions about their play and learning. In all areas children enjoy using the toys available to them, which are clean, safe and suitable to use. Throughout the setting there is sufficient furniture and equipment available to meet the care needs of all children attending. This includes, sufficient safety chairs and prams for the babies to use, and appropriate sized tables and chairs in all rooms, which contributes to ensuring the needs of the children are met.

Staff assess potential risks to children and put procedures and practices in place to minimise these. Regular risk assessments of the premises are conducted to ensure the environment is safe for children. Gates are used appropriately around the setting to ensure children remain safe, and are not able to leave their designated area. General visual safety checks of rooms used by the children, and the outdoor areas are carried out each day by staff. Emergency evacuations are practised each month with the children and a written record is kept. Staff encourage the older children to take some responsibility for their own safety, they remind children to sit on chairs safely and not to run inside. They encourage safe use of the bikes during outdoor play to allow other children to draw on the playground with chalks, without fear of being 'run over'. Staff encourage the children to tidy away the toys and equipment from the floor to help stop people falling or tripping over them. These actions help the children to develop an understanding of taking responsibility for their own safety and well-being and the well-being of others. This also helps to ensure that the children can enjoy a variety of play opportunities in safe surroundings.

Children are well protected by the staff who have a good understanding of their role in the protection of children. All staff are aware of the setting's child protection policy and procedures. There are clear procedures in place for monitoring and recording any concerns about children attending the setting. The manager has a clear understanding of the support systems available, and all staff make sure the children's welfare is always a priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children's individual care needs are well met in all areas of the setting. Very good relationships have been developed between staff and children throughout the provision. Staff know the children well and work together to ensure all children thrive and have their care needs met. Staff in the baby room and toddler room plan activities to meet children's specific learning and development needs and follow the Birth to three matters framework. This is having a positive impact on the learning and development of the children based in these rooms. A good range of development activities and resources are available to the children, which encourage learning and development in all areas.

In the baby room there is a relaxed and happy atmosphere. Staff are aware of children's individual sleep and mealtime routines and meet the children's care needs well. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the development and care needs of the babies and children in order to help them enjoy and achieve. Babies move around freely and have sufficient space to crawl and practise walking. Staff encourage the children to explore and investigate using all senses as appropriate. They provide the children with a variety of opportunities to do this, such as treasure baskets where the children explore texture with different materials. They explore with paint on the table top, spreading it with their hands, feeling it squish between their fingers. They make hand prints and marks on the mirror. Staff have developed good relationships with the children. They give lots of cuddles, physical contact and reassurance. They talk with the babies and young children, helping to develop early communication skills. Children respond to staff with smiles, giggles and facial expressions. The babies and young children feel happy, safe and secure in their surroundings. They babies are fascinated by the mirror and bell carousel as it spins and jingles. Staff sit on the floor with the children, with a child on each knee, reading books together. They look at the pictures, counting the animals and making their different noises. Good relationships are evident in this room, and children are making good progress in their development and learning.

There is a smooth transition from the baby room to the toddler room, as staff work closely to share information to ensure that children's care needs are identified and continuity of care is maintained. A balance of free-play and adult led activities are offered to the children who interact well, play alongside each other and are beginning to share and take turns. Activities are planned around the children's development needs, taking into account their likes and interests. Children's personal independence is being developed as the children make choices about their play and learning. They enjoy playing with the tea set during the water play. They fill the teapot and pour out cups of tea. The children enjoy the activity and show good concentration. They use their imagination and recreate familiar scenarios in the role play area. They use the dolls and pretend to care for their babies. They rub their backs to help them to sleep, later saying 'wakey wakey baby' as they take them out of the cot. The children enjoy the opportunities provided for outdoor play where they use the equipment available to them. They climb the steps and use the slide, waiting for it to be their turn. They use the watering can to pretend to water the plants and look for spiders in the webs that are on the garden area fence. The children enjoy singing songs and rhymes and request their favourites like 'Hey Diddle Diddle' and 'Baa Baa Black Sheep'. They are beginning to match the actions to many of the rhymes that they sing. Children are making good progress as they are suitably encouraged by staff. They guide and encourage children in their play, but do not dictate it. Children's care needs are well met and they are making good progress in their development and learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff in the pre-school demonstrate they are familiar with the Foundation Stage Curriculum and how children learn. They offer a varied programme that covers the six areas of learning. They are suitably deployed and involved in the activities provided to help children gain from the activities offered. They talk with the children and question them effectively, such as when looking at and comparing seeds, the staff ask the children 'what do you think this will grow into?' and 'what do we need to do to make it grow?' Children attending are confident and capable, most are developing well. Their development records however do not give a clear picture of how the actual progress has been made. There is no clear indication of children's starting points and often no evidence to clearly identify how or when some highlighted stepping stones have been met. Staff make and record observations of the children but these are often not accurately dated so they do not give a clear indication of when progress has been made. Children's progress files are not consistent or used effectively to help identify the next steps in the children's learning and development.

Children play together well, they understand how to take turns and wait patiently for their time to use the computer. They are able to sit quietly as appropriate, such as when listening to group stories. They are developing good relationships with each other and are sensitive to each others' needs. Some of the older children help the younger children to fasten their coats ready to go outside to play. They take responsibility for their personal care as they independently use the toilet facilities. They understand the daily routine and respond well to the praise and encouragement from staff as they help to tidy away the toys ready for snack time.

Children use language well to communicate and express their thoughts and ideas. They confidently initiate conversations with adults and each other, and eagerly talk about what they are doing or what they know. They recognise their written name, as they find their name card on the board each day at snack time. Their writing skills are being developed through planned activities and opportunities to mark make. Staff encourage children to write their names on their work. Some of the more able children copy words like 'table' and 'shoes' from word cards with pictures. Children enjoy books and listen well at group story-time. They regularly access books as part of the daily routine and know how to handle books carefully and correctly.

Children show an interest in numbers and counting. They count spontaneously within their chosen play, such as the candles on the birthday cake they have drawn. They recognise the different numbers on the flower pots when using the computer. They have looked at different shapes and made different shape people and faces for the display board when 'shapes' was the topic being covered. They have compared the size and shape of similar things such as the different types of seeds and bulbs.

Children have their own vegetable garden where they grow a variety of flowers and foods. They have grown tomatoes and potatoes which have been cooked and eaten for lunch at the setting. They have grown pumpkins which they have used for different activities such as 'Halloween'. The children know that the plants need to be nurtured and watered to help them grow. Children are developing their computer skills as they freely access the computer. They efficiently manoeuvre the mouse to click on the screen and follow the program. They confidently follow the daily routine, knowing what happens next, showing a sense of time. Through topics and themes they learn to value and respect the cultures and beliefs of others.

Children have access to a variety of creative activities. They use their imagination well during role-play and games. They use the puppet theatre and create their own story. Children's artwork is on display around the room. Staff have developed a 'busy board' to display specific individual pictures, which gives the children a sense of pride in their work and creations. Children enjoy

the music sessions. They bang the drums, shake the shakers, tap the triangle and ring the bells. They decide if it is appropriate to play loudly or quietly to different rhymes, such as playing quietly for 'Twinkle Twinkle little star', yet playing loudly for 'I hear Thunder'.

They show good control and coordination of their movements and a growing awareness of space. They move around the setting with confidence, they successfully negotiate space. The children have regular exercise and play outside in the fresh air daily and this helps to keep them fit. There is a well equipped outdoor play area which is well used. They confidently use their feet to push or pedal themselves when playing with the ride on toys, which they successfully negotiate around the play ground, parking them in the chalked out parking bays. Their fine motor skills are being developed as they use a variety of tools and equipment with increasing control and dexterity. They confidently use utensils of knives and forks at mealtimes, but staff do not allow children to pour their own drinks at meal and snack times to help further increase their personal independence. They use pens and pencils confidently to draw picture, and use paints and brushes when painting their own pictures at the easel.

Overall, the children are making good progress in all areas of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident and settled within the nursery, and they are valued and respected as individuals. They receive good support and care from staff who liaise closely with parents and carers to ensure children's individual progress is suitably enhanced. There is good support for children who have any learning difficulties or disabilities as staff have a sound understanding of issues. They ensure that appropriate action is taken within the centre, adapting activities as necessary, and they work closely with their parents and other professionals such as physiotherapists to ensure that the children are well supported and their needs are met. Throughout the nursery, good relationships are being developed between children and staff. Children play well together, in small groups and encourage others to join in.

The children are aware of the realistic boundaries and expectations for behaviour that have been set, and they are well behaved. Staff are consistent in their approach and use age appropriate strategies to manage behaviour. The children respond well to staff direction. Children in the baby room receive consistent verbal praise from staff along with claps and smiles. In the toddler room staff also consistently praise the children and gently remind them to be 'careful, we must wait our turn' when a child tries to push in front of others to use the slide. In the pre-school room staff have developed a system where children are awarded a butterfly to acknowledge good behaviour or achievement. Certificates are also awarded in this room to acknowledge special achievement. Staff use lots of praise and encouragement and are positive role models for the children. The children demonstrate good manners and are polite, saying 'please' and 'thank you' when appropriate, like at snack time when this is actively encouraged by staff.

Through planned activities the children are offered opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the natural world around them. They freely explore and investigate nature and the outdoor environment. They make good use of the garden areas within the setting, creating their own herb and vegetable gardens. The children grow vegetables which are used for the meals. They go for walks and visits on the college campus which helps them understand how they fit into the local environment. They join in and contribute to the college's Christmas and Easter celebrations. Children celebrate a variety of festivals and have access to resources which

help to promote positive attitudes to diversity. A varied range of resources and activities are provided, that reflect positive images of diversity. This helps the children to develop an accepting attitude towards others in society. Visits from people like the vicar and police, help the children to become familiar with the roles of different people within the community. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff are available to talk with parents each day which helps to contribute to the consistency in the children's care and well-being. Parents are able to access their children's details and progress folders at any time. The progress folders in the pre-school room though do not give a clear picture of children's progress and achievements through the stepping stones in the Foundation Stage. Parents spoken to are very happy with the care their children receive at the centre. They feel staff are very approachable and meet the needs of children and parents. In all areas of the centre children's activities and achievements are shared with parents at the end of each session. Information is also available to them through newsletters, notice boards, and the group prospectus. Daily diary sheets are also used in the baby and toddler rooms to record children's day, such as sleeps and food eaten. Parents receive good quality information about the provision and the activities so they understand what their children will be doing.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The care offered is well supported by efficient organisation. The leadership and management are good. The manager oversees the general running and organisation of the nursery. The daily sessions are organised by the room supervisors and their supporting staff. Staff are well qualified and experienced in childcare. They have a good understanding of child development. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and work effectively together as a team. Good team working is very apparent in all areas of the setting. Staff are all enthusiastic in their roles and committed to working with the children. The children benefit from the organised environment with well planned activities, which allow the children to play and explore freely. They experience a wide variety of different play opportunities which support their development and learning. Consequently, the sessions run smoothly for the children who make good progress. All the staff contribute to evaluating and recording the children's development. Staff have key groups of children and plan the next steps in their learning. The key worker system which is in place helps to ensure consistency of children's care. As a result of working well together, staff have a clear understanding of how to implement the activities effectively, adapting them as necessary to meet children's individual needs.

The required documentation relating to the children's education, care, health and safety is in place to ensure that they are cared for appropriately and the outcomes for children are promoted. Suitable procedures are in place with regards to the administering of medication. Documentation is suitably stored to ensure confidentiality. Annual appraisals are regularly completed for all staff and are used to identify future training needs. Relevant training courses are then sourced for staff to attend. Staff demonstrate they are knowledgeable about the nursery systems in place, which ensures a generally co-ordinated approach and familiar routines for the children. There is a positive ethos and the manager and staff work very hard to provide good quality care and learning experiences for the children.

Overall the centre meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were two recommendations from the last care inspection which were to; make sure that outside activities for pre-school children are consistently organised to ensure good supervision, and child participation, and to update policies and procedures to include informing Ofsted of significant events and allegations. Both of these recommendations have been suitably addressed. The organisation of the pre-school ensures suitable supervision of the children. Staff ensure that during outside play a minimum of two staff are present, ensuring that two members of staff are also present inside. An outside play rota has been introduced to allow children more variety and easier access to the activities, with less waiting to use equipment like the bikes and climbing apparatus. Children's safety is now adhered to at all times during outdoor play. With regards to policies and procedures, these have been reviewed and updated and now include the need to inform Ofsted of any significant events or allegations.

The nursery education inspection raised one point of consideration. This was to improve the consistency of children to listen to others during large group activities. The procedures for large group activities has been reviewed and now staff support each other by sitting with the children who need extra support to engage in this activity. Circle times and large group times are adapted to meet the needs of the children attending and children are encouraged to listen to others while waiting their turn to speak. The centre has also introduced 'Lisa' the large hand puppet which is used to help children listen and understand they should not interrupt and helps them to contribute to large group times in a positive way.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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):

- ensure the contents of the first aid box are kept in line with guidelines from current training
- review the snack time procedures for children in the pre-school, to further develop their personal independence, make sure they are provided with suitable utensils to ensure their health care needs

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):

- develop children's progress folders, to identify children's starting points and clearly evidence how progress has been achieved
- use children's progress records as a tool to inform planning of activities to ensure all children are suitably challenged and moved forward through the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage

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