

Pre-School Learning Alliance Hallcroft Children's Centre Crèche Services

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY361802
Inspection date	14/05/2009
Inspector	Gill Ogden
Setting address	Hallcroft Children's Centre, Whitaker Close, Hallcroft, Retford, Nottingham, DN22 7QH
Telephone number	07930 488 808
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

The Pre-School Learning Alliance Hallcroft Children's Centre Crèche Services was registered in 2007. It operates from Hallcroft Children's Centre in Retford, Nottinghamshire. Care is provided in the crèche room and the adjoining outdoor area. The setting is open throughout the year according to demand, except for a week at Christmas and public holidays. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The group is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children at any one time on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The group currently provides care for children whose parents are attending training sessions in the centre so numbers are variable from session to session. Two core staff, plus the manager, work with the children and they all hold relevant qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Children are very settled with the staff who recognise each of them as individuals. Close working relationships with parents contribute effectively towards children's general well-being and achievement. Each child is supported appropriately to make good progress in their learning and development. Links exist with others who are involved with the children which also has some benefit on their progress. Staff reflect well on their practice and broadly know their strengths and areas for future development. Systems for robust, ongoing self-evaluation are in the process of being developed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- confirm systems for working together with other providers in the best interests of the children
- link observations of individual children's learning and development more closely to the early learning goals so that challenges that are planned for children are fully effective in progressing their learning.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

An extremely robust framework is in place to support the care of children. Policies and procedures are very detailed and are explained thoroughly so that all concerned are in no doubt as to their purpose. All the required records are in place and maintained well. Risk assessments ensure that potential hazards in the environment are minimised. Children are safeguarded very effectively as a result of rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures and the staff team being very knowledgeable about their responsibilities. Systems for induction and appraisal

ensure that staff are well-supported to work to a high standard. All staff attend regular training to ensure they are kept informed about current practices and are encouraged to upgrade their qualifications. For example, both core staff are due to start further qualification training imminently, one to achieve NVQ Level 3 and the other a foundation degree. The staff and manager work very well together as a team and occasional staff are fully integrated to offer an extremely supportive experience for all the children. All the staff think about their practice and the improvements that could be made to improve the provision. Since registration, the crèche has become well-established, regarding both resources and the community. A robust, ongoing system for thorough self-evaluation is currently being worked on by all concerned.

Parents are provided with some useful information about the provision when they first start to use it, which includes a commitment to 'caring together' as well as basic policy information and an explanation of the key person system. Parents speak very positively about the care their children receive and their involvement. They are given plenty of time at the start of each session to share relevant information with staff about their children's needs at that time.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are looked after in a well resourced and stimulating environment where they develop warm and caring relationships with the staff. They have continuous access to the outdoors because there is a covered area immediately outside the doorway which ensures that they can all get plenty of fresh air and outdoor exercise. The playroom is set out so that babies can be well protected from older children in a sectioned off corner which is set out with toys such as activity centres and offers safe space for them to begin to move around and develop strong bodies. Close attention is paid to each child's personal hygiene whether it be changing nappies or encouraging them to wipe their noses and wash their hands. Children learn from an early age to keep themselves and others safe through, for example, staff consistently reminding them about moving carefully near babies and taking part in regular fire drills. Arrangements for children to sleep are organised according to parents' wishes. Some children sleep safely in their pushchairs just outside the doorway where staff can observe them easily through the large windows.

Although staff are never sure which children may attend at any one session, they work very hard to support their learning and development. Some children also attend other settings such as the local nursery class and although links exist with them these have not yet been developed fully to benefit the children as much as they might. Parents are involved from the start by completing an 'all about me' booklet so that staff have a solid basis on which to plan for each child. Children's individual interests are identified so that they can be included in the plans for their next session. Ongoing observations then allow for planning according to each child's needs as well as their interests. Records are completed every six weeks which help to identify the next steps for the children. However, these are not yet linked closely enough to the early learning goals in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure children are challenged fully effectively to progress as rapidly as

possible.

Resources and activities are set out for children at every session to include opportunities for learning in all the areas. Good attention is paid to every child to ensure they have an enjoyable experience. For example, a child who is older and more able than the majority is supported well by staff to enjoy physical play, painting, role play, reading and singing at a level which maintains her interest and promotes her confidence and self-esteem and impacts on her achievements in creativity, literacy, numeracy, social skills, physical skills and understanding of the world around her. Younger children are enabled effectively to develop in similar areas but in different ways, such as exploring all the environment has to offer, dancing to music, being encouraged to communicate through actions to songs and rhymes, pressing buttons to make things work, clapping and having appropriate cuddles. All the children behave extremely well partly as a result of the staff acting as good examples to them and involving themselves appropriately to prevent any undesirable behaviour. Overall, children have every opportunity to develop the habits and behaviour appropriate to good learners, their own needs, and those of others.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met