

# Northend Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Inspection date</b>	09/11/2010
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<b>Type of setting</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## 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.

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## Description of the setting

Northend Children's Centre is a full day care provision run by the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The children's centre registered in 2006 and is based on the ground floor of purpose built premises that is shared with Sure Start, who operate from the first floor. The Children's Centre is situated in Erith, within the London Borough of Bexley. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The Children's Centre is open weekdays from 8am to 6pm, all year round. Both full day care and sessional places are available.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 78 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 122 children aged from birth to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are 18 members of staff, all hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least NVQ level 2. One member of staff has also achieved Early Years Professional Status.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in the environment as they are cared for by attentive and experienced staff. A strong management team and extremely well established systems for communicating with parents and carers underpin excellent continuity of care for all children. The setting delivers the Early Years Foundation Stage with exemption. Staff have excellent knowledge all the children's individual needs, as a result staff promote the children's welfare and learning development with great success. Staff ensure children learn about the world around them in a fun and educational manner, which children greatly enjoy. The management team take effective steps to ensure they continually improve outcomes for children.

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality of provision enables staff to implement appropriate improvements and excellent account is taken of recommendations made through inspection. Evaluation and reflective practice ensures the setting builds on the staff's professional development and that of the service it provides. Partnerships with outside agencies is a key strength of the Nursery that ensures children's needs are fully met.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- Continue to reflect on current practice to maintain continuous capacity to improve with particular reference to the transition assessment sheets from

babies to toddlers

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Safeguarding children is paramount to the nursery. Children are kept safe and secure due to the vigilance of staff and the robust risk assessments in place. All staff have a thorough knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and the steps to follow if they have any concerns. A comprehensive fire evacuation plan is in place for all areas of the nursery. Children are cared for by staff who have been checked through the Criminal Records Bureau and who have undergone a thorough and robust recruitment and induction programme. This ensures that all staff working in the nursery are suitable and have relevant training and experience. Children's care is significantly enhanced by the exceptional organisation of the nursery. Staff are consistent in their interactions with children and in their regard for safety and security. The extensive range of policies and procedures ensure children's safety and well-being is paramount. All comprehensive documentation relating to staff and children is recorded and stored appropriately, ensuring confidentiality is maintained at all times. Strong leadership by a highly qualified manager ensures that the provision strives to provide a consistently high quality of education and care.

The nursery has highly effective and secure measures in place to ensure that risks to children's safety, both indoors and outdoors, are minimised; such as, clear procedures for the safe arrival and departure of children to and from the nursery and visitors are asked for ID and to sign the visitors book on arrival. Visitors are also informed of the fire procedure in the event of an incident. Formal risk assessments are effective in ensuring that potential hazards to children are minimised, for example, safety gates are securely fixed and appropriately used, door hinges are protected with safety guards, security intercom systems in place, broken toys and resources are removed from play areas, fire exits are clearly labeled and are in working order and fire extinguishers are in place and securely fixed to the wall. There are comprehensive and clearly written procedures in place that staff are aware of and these are consistently applied. Play areas, furniture, equipment and resources are effectively organised enabling children to move freely and independently between activities and different areas. As a result, children feel confident within the nursery and are safe and secure. All the group rooms and communal areas are brightly decorated with children's art work, posters, notice boards, hanging decorative mobiles and photographs. The premises are exceptionally clean, airy, well lit and effectively heated, ensuring that it is suitable for children to use at all times. Resources provided in each room are substantially well-organised so they are attractive and accessible to all children.

The staff liaise closely with parents from the start. There are clear settling procedures and they are asked to provide information about their children's routines, likes, dislikes and interests. Parents are constantly encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. They are informed daily about activities their children have undertaken and have unlimited access to observations and assessments of their children's progress. Partnerships with both parents and other

settings are extremely strong and a key strength of the provision. Families are included in meaningful ways to ensure excellent support for children's needs particularly around special educational needs, culture and language. Children are cared for by staff who are first aid trained and excellent procedures are in place to support children who require prescribed medication. Staff record accidents on individual sheets to maintain confidentiality. Each sheet is signed by the member of staff who dealt with the accident, the manager and parent. Accident sheets are filed in children's record files and kept in a lockable filing cabinet in the manager's office. This ensures that children's health requirements are met and confidentiality is maintained.

Extremely positive steps have been taken to ensure that children can move on successfully to new settings, as strong links are in place with the local schools and their key persons are involved heavily in their transitions. These steps contribute to great continuity of care for all children. All children are well supported to be able to join in all the activities. Plenty of pictorial images, warm staff and activities that are adapted for all individuals, encouraging all children to have a voice and give them access to take part in all activities on offer so that everyone is valued and included.

The provider has established a strong management team which ensures that the setting is run effectively and meets children's needs. Staff are all aware of their roles and responsibilities and this enables them to work effectively to achieve the outcomes for children. Strong self-evaluation systems are in place and demonstrate the provider's excellent awareness of the setting's strengths and weaknesses. The management team seek input from the staff, children and parents into the evaluative process so that they can maintain continuous improvements. In particular to work on improving the outdoor area to ensure there is a focus to support children's continual development in the outdoor environment. The manager, deputy manager and staff are all professional, enthusiastic and highly motivated in their approach to providing all the children with positive early years play and learning experiences. The manager has a very hands on approach, a reflective and consultative practice is promoted within the nursery ensuring an open working practice is maintained. For example, the manager discussed future ideas for developments for the nursery to extend their exceptional practice further. She addressed ways to improve transition from baby room to toddler room and the assessments of children's achievements when they move to toddler room and extending the development of the sensory room. Staff are fully supported by the manager and excellent communication systems are in place to ensure continuity of care. Regular staff meetings ensure that the care and education children receive is regularly discussed and improved, with all staff members having the opportunity to contribute ideas and suggestions. Overall, children make outstanding progress in their learning and have excellent levels of achievement given their capabilities and starting points and the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

Children develop extremely close and trusting relationships with each other and the adults in the setting, which promotes their confidence, self-esteem and gives them a real sense of belonging. All the children are very happy, contented and settled within the nursery. They are cared for and taught by extremely motivated and enthusiastic staff, which helps children to become fully engaged in the activities; for example, during the creation of firework collages, using glue and tissue paper, staff sit with the children and successfully support and extend their imagination. Children are provided with an extensive range of inspiring activities and play opportunities such as growing vegetables and fruit in the garden, mud crafts and painting at Forest School, sticking and gluing collages and experimenting with musical instruments. The babies particularly enjoy playing with mirrors and sitting amongst soft cushions. Consequently, children are extensively and consistently stimulated by the activities provided and their interest is successfully maintained.

The children are cared for by staff who have an excellent, extensive and inspirational understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how children play and learn. This helps to ensure that children make outstanding progress through the early learning goals, in line with their age and individual abilities and interests. Children and parents are involved in the planning of activities, which enables staff to accurately assess children's developmental progress and plan future activities for them. Staff use children's individual profiles to track their developmental progress, including initial profiles of baseline assessment, helping staff to successfully track children's progress. Children take part in an extensive range of activities that cover all six areas of learning. The combination of free flow play, child initiated activities and adult led activities enables children to work and play purposefully together as well as to respond positively to staff requests, such as tidy up time, story time and lunch time. Children's views are always taken into account in planning. Planning is flexible and adapted in line with children's ideas or if anything significant has happened to them; for example, a house move, visit to the dentist or a new baby. This helps children to feel valued.

Children learn to play in a culturally rich environment that positively reflects diversity, for example, posters and signs in other languages. They take part in activities that reflect the diversity of the society in which they live. Children learn about different celebrations, for example, pictorial wall displays show the children recently enjoying face paintings and African drumming to celebrate Black History Month and work samples of children's Mehndi patterns for the celebration of Diwali. During the visit children were excited to explain about their rockets hanging from the ceilings and about firework displays. Children are encouraged to understand and develop positive relationships with others who are different from themselves. They learn respect for diversity, acceptance of difference and about fairness, tolerance and respect for others. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that every child is included and not disadvantaged. There are effective systems to promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice; for example, information about the Nursery and policies are accessible in written and spoken form and

where requested offered in different languages.

The setting has some fabulous resources reflecting diversity, which are used to help children learn to value differences. They are able to access resources including toys, dressing up clothes, play people, books, puzzles, musical instruments, foods and posters. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities take part fully in all nursery activities. They are exceptionally well supported by staff who have a positive approach to meeting their needs. A special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) works with parents and outside agencies to always ensure that all children develop confidence and make excellent progress.

Staff are very skilled in their questioning techniques, consistently challenging children's thinking and allowing them to express their own ideas and thoughts. This extends their learning and encourages their problem solving skills; for example, questions about what they are eating during meal times, healthy food discussions and where the food comes from. Children's speech and language skills are also monitored through ECAT (Every Child A Talker).

Children clearly enjoy the free access they have to the resources. This builds the children's self-esteem and confidence as they independently choose what activities they would like to take part in. Children are extremely well supported in the acquisition of useful skills in literacy and numeracy, which helps them develop a range of excellent skills for the future. They talk about pictures on the wall and sing songs linked to these and learn to recognize simple words, shapes and colours. They use numbers in a variety of different situations; for example, practical and interesting mathematical processes such as measuring the required distance between vegetables when planting, weighing and measuring ingredients when cooking and counting the number of children together at meal times to ensure the correct number of plates are available. Children respond positively when staff praise and encourage them for counting successfully to ten whilst scooping sand. They particularly enjoy digging, planting, and sand and water activities.

Children have exceptional opportunities to explore objects that help them to learn about the natural world, through The Forest School project that has been set up at the local primary school. They are encouraged to grow their own vegetables and seeds, create mud pies and mud hand paintings. Children learn about their local community through visitors to the nursery such as the fire brigade, police officers, the dentist and through trips out, for example, the Forest school and local library. Children can freely access musical instruments in order to learn about making different sounds. Staff encourage this, helping children to identify and play simple patterns and rhythms in music. Children have free access to an extensive and imaginative range of creative materials such as twigs, oats, rice, pasta and corn flour. They can also paint and draw any time, allowing them to develop ideas and practise fine motor skills. Their physical skills are effectively promoted through an extensive variety of equipment; for example, climbing frame, climbing walls, bats, balls, hoops, bicycles and tricycles. They are enthusiastic and particularly enjoy music and movement songs, such as 'Twinkle Twinkle' and 'If you're happy and you know it'.

Children behave exceptionally well. The extremely calm and patient approach implemented by the staff team helps the children to clearly understand right from wrong and the consequences of their actions. Full explanations are given to children. Staff have high expectations and set consistent boundaries for all children, which helps them to learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Staff provide excellent role models by being calm and polite. Praise is consistently given, ensuring that children develop confidence and self-esteem and understand that they have done well.

Children have an excellent understanding of healthy eating and are encouraged to discuss the healthy foods on offer to them throughout the day. Contamination and infection are minimised because extremely effective procedures are in place. Children are taught about the importance of personal hygiene throughout their day at the nursery. Staff ensure the children wash their hands before and after meals and snacks. Menus are regularly updated and provide a healthy and nutritious selection of meals and snacks. The nursery work closely with parents to ensure meals meet the children's dietary requirements and weekly menus are displayed on the notice board. The children have access to water at all times and are given fruit and vegetables at snack times.

## 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*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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