

Shoebury Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	25/11/2010
Inspector	Patricia Champion

Setting address	Delaware Road, Shoeburyness, SOUTHEND-ON-SEA, SS3 9NS
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Type of setting	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

Shoebury Children's Centre is one of a chain of nurseries run by the Pre-School Learning Alliance. It opened in 2005 and operates from five rooms within purpose built two-storey premises situated in Shoeburyness, Essex. The nursery is located within walking distance of local schools, shops and the railway station. Children share access to secure, enclosed, outdoor play areas. The playrooms on the first-floor can be accessed by a lift or flight of stairs. A maximum of 84 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery opens five days a week all year round. Operating times are from 8am until 6pm.

There are currently 158 children aged from six months to 11 years on roll. Children aged two, three and four years receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions, out of school care or full day care. The nursery serves the local community and surrounding areas. The setting supports a number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who have English as an additional language.

The provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The nursery employs 29 staff, of whom 28, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are two staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification and two working towards higher qualifications. The nursery also employs a cook, administrator and receptionist. The setting receives support from the local authority, including a qualified teacher with Early Years Professional Status.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's positive and happy experiences contribute to their making good progress towards the early learning goals and achieving good outcomes. The skilled and friendly staff team demonstrate that meeting children's needs and promoting their welfare and safety is paramount at all times. The effective sharing of information with parents and other professionals enhances the children's learning and development. An inclusive and generally stimulating environment is provided where every child really matters. The nursery values the importance of reflective practice and continuous development and has made many improvements since the last inspection.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the plans for the outdoor areas to ensure that all children are

inspired and challenged to achieve as much as they can in a rich and varied learning environment

- review and revise developmental records to ensure that children's progress is consistently evaluated and analysed, and enable parents to have more regular opportunities to add their comments to records.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare is safeguarded by staff that have a secure understanding of their child protection responsibilities. There are effective systems in place to assure children's safety and well-being. Written policies are well implemented and regularly updated. Robust procedures ensure that all adults in contact with children are suitable to do so. Rigorous background checks are undertaken and all staff are cleared through the Criminal Records Bureau before they start working in the nursery. There are secure entry systems and any visitors are closely monitored. Risk assessments are efficiently carried out and recorded to maintain the safe and secure premises and to minimise the risks to children while on outings.

The staff team work well together, supporting each other to ensure consistency of care for individual children. They are strongly encouraged to attend training courses to meet the needs of the nursery and for their own professional development. A comprehensive and intelligent self-evaluation of the provision has been recorded and is used as a tool to monitor the quality of the nursery. The nursery has taken part in pilot schemes to enhance children's communication skills and has also achieved the first level of the 'Reflecting on Quality' award. Plans for the future are well targeted to bring about further improvement to the provision and the management adopt a highly committed and conscientious approach to developing outcomes for children.

The staff promote and support diversity well to help the children understand the society they live in. Resources which portray positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disabilities are used within everyday play. This ensures that children feel good about themselves and acquire a positive attitude towards each others' differences. There are effective systems in place to support children with special education needs or those with English as an additional language, including one-to-one support and visual tools to enhance understanding.

Children settle very well and receive a good level of care because the staff work closely with individual children and their families. The nursery places a great value in ensuring that parents have a say in the care and well-being of their children. Parents and carers are encouraged to share what they know about their child when they first start, which helps staff to have a secure knowledge of each child's background and needs. The staff provide updates of children's achievements, including daily information sheets about babies' care routines. This information helps parents understand how their children develop. However, parents are not yet adding their observations of children's progress to the development records to enhance continuity and coherence in children's learning. Parents speak very positively about the nursery and state that the key strength is the team of staff.

The nursery has good links with other early years providers and schools as they recognise the importance of this in helping children with the transition to their reception year.

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

Children have formed warm relationships with the staff and have lots of fun with them. Staff deployment is efficiently organised, which results in children's needs being supported at all times without over-directing them. The staff successfully integrate all areas of learning into daily routines and activities are planned and delivered in tune with each child's interests, enthusiasms and capabilities. Staff are adept at making the most of opportunities during the day to ask open questions. This encourages children to find out about the world around them, to understand numbers and work out simple problems, such as, whether there are enough plates and cups on the table. The staff team are developing confidence in undertaking sensitive observational assessments and planning of activities to meet children's individual needs. However, ongoing assessments are not yet consistent for the different age groups. Learning records are not all regularly analysed to identify gaps in children's learning or to ensure that experiences enable children to achieve as much as they can.

A good selection of easily accessible core activities and resources promote children's confidence and independence when they play indoors. Children are developing a true sense of belonging as staff foster indoor child-led activities with plenty of free choice and opportunities to express themselves through language and creative or imaginative experiences. All children have access to many sensory and tactile experiences and a wide range of props and costumes are provided so children can act out real life or imagined scenarios. Children demonstrate their knowledge of technology as they independently use the computer or interact with images on the smart board. The groups of children involved in the Forest Schools programme are offered a new and challenging outdoor environment where they can explore, experiment and investigate. The management of the nursery have already identified an action plan to improve further the facilities in the outdoor areas surrounding the nursery. They are aware that this will provide a much richer and welcoming environment that will inspire all children to learn and make more independent choices when playing outside.

Effective standards of cleanliness are maintained throughout the nursery and both children and staff demonstrate a good understanding of important hygiene routines. Nappy changing is hygienically and sensitively undertaken and nourishing snacks and wholesome, freshly cooked meals are provided. Children help themselves to drinks when thirsty and use the water dispenser with ability and confidence. Staff encourage children to learn polite table manners and this extends to opportunities for speaking and listening. Space is provided in each room for children to rest or sleep peacefully according to their needs. Children demonstrate good coordination skills for both their large and small muscles. They show good spatial awareness as they steer and manoeuvre wheeled toys and develop their hand-eye coordination scooping sand into containers or when practising their early

writing skills.

Children learn about the importance of keeping themselves safe as they are reminded by staff about what is safe practice and they take part in regular emergency evacuation procedures. The Forest School programme also heightens children's awareness of the need for responsible behaviour and they develop a strong sense of staying safe when crossing roads. Children's positive behaviour is rewarded with lots of praise and encouragement. Staff have clear behaviour management strategies in place and work with parents to provide stability for the children. Consequently, children become active, inquisitive and curious learners and make good progress, given their starting points and capabilities.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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