

Children & Family Unit

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Pamela Bailey

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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

Children & Family Unit is one of two childcare provisions run by Ackroyd Children and Families Children's Centre Board of Trustees. It opened in 1980 and operates from two rooms situated on the first floor in a community centre. Children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is located in a residential and commercial area of Brockley, situated within the London Borough of Lewisham. It is open each weekday from 8:00am to 6:00pm all year round, with the exception of bank holidays.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 26 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 26 children aged from one year to under five years on roll, some in part time places. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and provides funded early education for three and four year olds.

There are seven members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least NVQ level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Overall, children make good progress in their learning and development. Staff are effective in ensuring that all children are well integrated and strong links with parents/carers help to involve them in their children's care and education. Good arrangements exist to ensure children's safety and health, and encourage their involvement in the wider community. Those in charge have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and take effective steps to improve it.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve further the use of resources by encouraging children to make comparisons and increase their awareness of the different purposes for writing such as, labelling their work
- encourage children to think about their own personal needs by making fresh drinking water readily available for children to help themselves
- provide regular opportunities to practice the emergency evacuation procedures so that all children become familiar with the routine in the event of an emergency
- improve further partnerships with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage for a child or group of children to ensure progression and

continuity of learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Those in charge are focused on helping all children to make good progress in their learning and development, and promoting their welfare. There is a common sense of purpose between staff who work well together to ensure that all groups of children have the opportunity to achieve as well as they can. Robust steps are taken to safeguard children, including vetting procedures which ensures that all staff are suitable to work with the children. There are suitable contingency arrangements in place to cover any absences. Effective procedures are in place for identifying any child at risk of harm and liaising with the appropriate child agencies which are fully understood by staff. The environment in which children are cared for and educated is safe and supportive, and there are clear procedures for outings that ensure children's safety. Staff identify dangers, take good steps to eliminate risk and children are taught to be safety conscious without being fearful in most areas. Although there are some opportunities for staff and children to practise the emergency evacuation procedures these are not frequent enough to ensure that all children become familiar with the routine in the event of an emergency. There are effective procedures in place to prevent the spread of infection and promote children's good health.

Ackroyd Children and Families work closely with the London Borough of Lewisham and have recently successfully achieved the children's centre status in which they have become one of the Borough's Area 2 Sure Start Children's Centres. They have developed multi-agency links and secured funding from Lewisham Play Care and Learn Quality and Access funds. Management and staff are highly motivated and have a clear sense of purpose about what they want to achieve. Self-evaluation takes into account the views of staff, parents/carers and other interested partners. It is effective in identifying strengths and weaknesses of the provision and makes good use of findings from other quality checks. They are confident about what the setting needs to do to improve further and have been successful in making and sustaining improvements including those identified at the previous inspection. For example, the implementation of twice yearly parent/carer meetings to discuss children's progress ensures that parent/carers are kept well informed of their children's development and achievements. The purchasing of additional resources and re-arrangements of daily routines ensures that staff are able to support children's learning and development well across all areas and promote their welfare. Regular staff training needs analysis and the effective systems for the continual assessment and development of staff ensure staff keep up to date with changes and learn new skills. Staff are committed to continual professional development. For example, some staff are working towards a higher professional qualification or degree in early years.

The setting strives to provide a service that is inclusive for all. Positive images that reflect similarities and differences within the nursery and wider community, and photographs of children around the nursery give children and families a sense of belonging and help children to learn about and understand the society in which

they live. The settling-in process is seen as a critical period for getting to know the child and family. This ensures that staff have good knowledge of each child's background and identify a child's need for additional support as early as possible. Children with English as an additional language use their home language in their play and are making steady progress in learning English. Staff work with parents to learn key words, signs and gestures. There is a strong focus on supporting the language, communication and social skills to enable all children to achieve and participate. Although there are no children currently attending with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, effective partnerships has been established with Lewisham Early Years Action and Resource Network (LEARN) and early intervention team. They regularly share best practice, and staff are able to access specialist knowledge and skills, resources and equipment. This ensures good systems are in place to provide support for children and families where appropriate, at an early stage. However, systems are not fully in place with other providers to ensure progression and continuity of learning for a child or group of children attending other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are highly positive relationships with parents/carers. Ninety-five per cent are members of the board and are involved in any major decision making about the provision. Parents/carers steering group meetings are held regularly to discuss views and share ideas and receive comprehensive information about their child's progress.

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

Staff's good knowledge of the welfare, learning and development requirements, and an interesting, well-equipped, and welcoming environment promotes and supports a positive attitude to children's learning, social, physical and economic well-being overall. Activities are well planned, based on thorough observations and assessments that are generally well matched to the full range of children's needs. Interactions between adults, children, and adults and children are good. Children are very confident, engaged and take responsibility for choosing what they do. They form friendships, collaborate well with others and develop enthusiasm for learning. Children demonstrate a willingness to keep themselves and others safe through good behaviour and are able to share concerns with their key person or other adults at the setting.

Staff are good role models and build on children's confidence and self-esteem. They listen to the children, using polite language, responding well to children's interests, requests and making the children their priority. Children's communication skills are developing well. They are curious, ask questions and engage easily in conversations with each other. They confidently introduce themselves to visitors, enquire about the purpose of the visitor and talk openly about their experiences at the nursery and home. There are plenty of opportunities for children to practise their pre-writing skills. For example, making marks in foam, chalk drawing, painting and during role play. Children understand that print carries meaning; many are able to recognise their names on place mats, individual lockers and coat hanging. Older/more able children confidently sound letter as they spell their name

out aloud, but have little opportunity to practise writing their names as staff generally label their work.

Children are learning to count and understand numbers through a range of practical experiences and many children are able to count beyond 10. For example, counting the number of steps as they go up and down the stairs and during outdoor play. They choose number activities during free play and enjoy number rhymes and songs. Children are able to sort by colour, although older/more able children have less opportunity to make comparisons and extend their understanding, such as more, or less. Children learn about the world they live in; different cultures and beliefs through celebrations, exploring natural materials and visits in the local community. Children use a range of different resources, such as, magnifying glasses and magnets to investigate objects and living things. They have access to information technology and confidently explain how to use the mouse to access the different programmes on the computer and use mobile phones and cameras during role play.

Children use a range of small equipment with increasing control as they select tools for specific tasks such as writing or cutting. Children can run; jump and balance, moving confidently and safely during outdoor play and during trips to the local park. They have opportunities to climb and scramble over and through climbing equipment and manoeuvre wheeled toys. Healthy eating is encouraged from a young age and individual dietary requirements and allergies are catered for. Children enjoy nutritious meals freshly prepared on the premises and regularly receive water. However, this is not readily available at all times for children to help themselves and encourage children to think about their personal needs. Children move towards independence as they dress and undress themselves, and serve their own foods at snack and meal times. They learn the importance of good personal hygiene and self care skill through effective routines.

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