



Catchgate Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY331521
Inspection date	22 March 2007
Inspector	Julie Morrison
Setting Address	Catchgate Primary School, Blackett Street, Catchgate, Stanley, Co. Durham, DH9 8LX
Telephone number	01207234252
E-mail	admin@catchgatechildcare.co.uk
Registered person	Catchgate Childcare Ltd
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Catchgate Children's Centre is based within Catchgate Primary School, in the Stanley area of County Durham. Local amenities and public transport systems are within walking distance. The centre is managed by Catchgate Childcare Limited and supported by the local Sure Start Programme. Children are based in a self contained room within the school adjacent to the nursery and reception class. They have independent access to toilet and hand washing facilities. There is a suitable outdoor area available for outside play. The centre is registered to care for a maximum of 32 children aged from birth to under five years and has 21 children on roll under the age of eight years. The centre is open from 07.45 to 18.15, Monday to Friday all year round, excluding bank holidays and Christmas week.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Suitable standards of hygiene and cleanliness are maintained throughout the nursery to promote children's good health. Tables are cleaned before food and there is a cleaning rota in place. Staff follow good nappy changing procedures, they wash hands, wear gloves and aprons and dispose of the nappies hygienically. Consistent adult guidance and support helps the younger children to gain independence in their personal care, for example, washing hands before lunch and after the toilet. Older children confidently go to the toilet themselves and explain that they need to wash their hands so that they do not 'get germs and a poorly tummy'. However, there is a potential risk of cross infection as several children did not wash their hands before snack time. Information relating to periods of infection is available to parents, however, a sick child policy clearly explaining the exclusion of children who are ill or the procedure for contacting parents should a child become ill whilst at nursery is not in place. Children's health and well-being is supported through effective recording of emergency consents, medication permission and accident records.

Children have some opportunities for physical exercise which contributes to their good health. Inside children are able to explore their environment and play on a small indoor climbing frame and slide. Outside there is a wide range of large and small play equipment, for example, sand pit, tunnels, cars, bikes, scooters and writing boards which promotes children's physical development and helps them to gain increasing control over their bodies. Children have access to suitable waterproof clothing so that they are able to go outside and explore the area, however, not all of the children benefited from outdoor play. Appropriate arrangements are in place for children to sleep, this means that children are able to be active or rest according to their individual needs.

Children benefit from having a well balanced and nutritious diet and staff try to provide three of the recommended five portions of fruit and vegetables a day for children. The out of school club provides a choice of toast, cereals and porridge and lunches include, lasagne, vegetable soup and fish fingers with potatoes. Healthy snacks are provided throughout the day for children, for example, breadsticks and dried fruit, children have constant access to water. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that individual dietary needs are met. For example, vegetarian and dairy free diets.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure and welcoming environment where most of the risks have been identified and minimised. For example, written risk assessments are in place and staff do a visual daily check of the nursery before the children arrive. The premises are secure, doors are kept locked and visitors must use the main Children's Centre entrance and sign in and out to ensure the safety of the children. The rooms are well laid out to enable children to move around independently and freely to explore their environment. Child sizes storage, shelves

and trays means that children are able to make independent choices from a wide range of good quality and developmentally appropriate resources.

The setting has a good range of written policies in place which cover most safety issues and are understood and implemented by the staff. For example, lost or uncollected children and fire procedures, including regular fire drills. Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves safe as they know the fire routine well and can explain what they have to do if the bell rings. Effective procedures keep children safe on outings, for example, an outings policy, written consent from parents and staff ensuring emergency contact details are taken. Children wear fluorescent armbands and young children are securely strapped in buggies whilst older children hold hands and learn about road safety.

Children are effectively safeguarded as staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in relation to child protection, including if an allegation was made against a member of staff. They have a clear written child protection policy in place and a secure understanding of the signs and symptoms to be aware of. Procedures are in place to record existing injuries to children and staff have completed child protection training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally happy and settled in the nursery and are beginning to develop warm relationships with the staff and each other. Children approach staff confidently with questions or for comfort and reassurance, they show care and concern for one another, for example when one child falls over, another rubs his back and tells him how brave he is for not crying. Staff and children's photographs are displayed in the nursery, this contributes to a feeling of belonging for the children. Activities are generally unplanned and the children have free choice, however, there is a good balance of adult and child led activities and staff make good use of questions to promote children's learning and development. For example, children shine torches and the staff discuss how big and little the shadows are and lift the children up so that they can make shadows on the ceiling. Staff interact well with children, they sit and read stories to them and encourage them to make marks and write their name. Children also play independently, they put on aprons and thoroughly enjoy splashing around and experimenting with the water. Younger children enjoy exploring treasure baskets, trying on bangles and looking through pieces of coloured plastic. Resources for children from the out of school club are limited and tables and chairs are only suitable for smaller children. The children have a selection of board games to choose from and take part in arts and crafts activities, for example, making and painting pasta necklaces. Questionnaires completed by children from the out of school club show that they all enjoy coming to the club.

Staff have some understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, however, as they have received no training in this area they are unsure about implementing it. No written plans are in place, however, staff do make observations of the children which they link to the outcomes for children and record in moving on files. Staff make good links with the nursery teacher to help prepare the children for moving into school and develop basic weekly plans for the older children. However, due to the free choice nature of the setting these plans are not always

implemented and staff do not effectively record progress on the stepping stones for the older and more able children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff provide a good range of resources and activities to help to raise children's awareness of diversity. For example, the setting has a good selection of informative books, dressing up clothes, posters, dolls from different cultures and small wheelchairs and crutches for dolls. The children recently celebrated Chinese New Year, they tasted Chinese food, made cards and money bags, providing the children with good opportunities to learn about different cultures. Walks around their local area, to the park, shops and library help the children to become aware of their local community. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the needs of children with learning difficulties or disabilities. The manager is the special educational needs coordinator and she is committed to ongoing training and to working with parents and other professionals to ensure that children's individual needs can be met.

Children display a sense of belonging in the setting, and benefit from staff who know them well. They recognise when children are tired or unwell and take appropriate action to benefit the welfare of the child. For example, asking a parent to collect an unwell child. Children's behaviour is good as staff use age appropriate techniques to manage behaviour. For example, they clearly explain to older children that they must not climb up the slide as they may fall and get hurt and use distraction techniques with younger children. Praise is given freely to children ensuring that they develop confidence and self-esteem and understand what they have done well.

Children benefit from positive relationships between staff and parents. Parents receive an informative information pack about the setting, which includes policies and procedures and staff gather detailed information about the children, such as likes, dislikes, allergies and health requirements to ensure that children's individual needs can be met. An information board for parents displays complaints information, general health information, registration certificate and information about the staff. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress through daily diaries for the younger children and verbal feedback for older children. Regular questionnaires completed by parents rate the care that their children receive as good to excellent.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Secure recruitment and vetting procedures and policies are in place to ensure that children are well protected and cared for by staff with relevant experience, knowledge and skills. Thorough induction systems, staff meetings and staff appraisals ensure that staff are valued and continue to develop their practice. Staff are committed to attending relevant training courses to enhance their personal development and quality of care for the children. Children are well cared for in an organised setting which promotes their welfare. Space is used to its maximum potential, enabling children to access toys and resources and make choices about their learning. A key

worker system helps the children to feel secure, however, children are happy and comfortable in the care of all staff including the manager, who knows the children well.

The setting benefits from good links with the school, regular visits from the nursery teacher helps children to settle in when they start nursery and promotes children's development and learning. Most records, policies and procedures, which are required for the safe and effective management of the setting and to promote the welfare, care and learning of the children, are in place. All documentation is well organised and stored securely for easy access and confidentiality.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required 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 complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

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 that all children wash hands before snacks
- increase opportunities for all children to have access to regular physical exercise
- develop staffs understanding of birth to three and the Foundation Stage, and make effective use of plans to monitor progress and extend children's learning
- ensure that there is a clear sick child policy in place.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk