



Linaker Primary School & Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY336127
Inspection date	29 November 2006
Inspector	Kathy Ann Leatherbarrow
Setting Address	Linaker Primary School, Sefton Street, SOUTHPORT, Merseyside, PR8 5DB
Telephone number	01704 532343
E-mail	colin.coleman@linekarmail.co.uk
Registered person	Linaker Primary School & Childrens Centre
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Sessional care, Out of School care, Crèche

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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Linaker Primary School and Children's Centre was registered in June 2006. The centre is located close to the town centre in Southport, Merseyside. The day care operates from base rooms for children according to their age and stage of development and offers additional services for families. The crèche facilities are provided from additional rooms within the centre and the out of school provision is operated within the main school building.

The centre is open all year round excluding Christmas and Bank Holidays. Opening hours are from 08.00 to 18.00. The centre is registered to provide care for no more than 91 children at any one time. There are currently 80 children on roll, five of whom receive funded nursery education.

The centre supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language. There are two full time deputy managers in post who hold appropriate early years qualifications. They currently manage a team of 16 staff members who work directly with the children. Of the staff, 15 hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is protected due to the good attention given by staff to ensuring that all aspects of the setting are clean and well maintained. Staff are proactive in ensuring that the spread of infection is minimised, for example, staff use appropriate sprays to clean surfaces, the changing mat is cleaned, infants have individual bedding, and high chairs are wiped down before and after every use. Older children are confident in their personal care because they are encouraged throughout the day to wash their hands and understand the reasons for doing this. This is further enhanced by the use of picture reminders in the bathrooms.

A number of staff members hold current first aid certificates. There are first aid kits around the nursery to ensure children's health needs are met in the event of an accident and a child requiring first aid treatment. All administered medication is recorded appropriately, however, the record is not signed by parents to acknowledge the entry. Clear procedures are in place regarding the exclusion of children who become ill or infectious. Staff take appropriate measures to comfort children and monitor their welfare. This results in children's health being well supported.

At meal times, tables are attractively set with table cloths, flowers, cups, knives and forks. This creates a friendly environment where children are learning good table manners and social skills as they talk to their friends during their meal. However, staff at times limit children's independence as they pour the drinks and give out bread. Children benefit from nutritious meals with fresh produce on offer daily, for example, pasta in a tomato-based sauce with vegetables such as broccoli, carrots and green beans. Children are offered frequent healthy, well balanced snacks. Staff attractively present a range of tangerine segments, sliced banana, and red and green apple, and encourage children to try a selection of them all. This promotes their healthy growth and development.

Children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise and take part in a sound range of activities. This contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Out of school children play group games with bats and balls. Pre-school children make trains out of cardboard, and organise train stations with conductors and ticket information. Toddlers explore the outdoor environment with torches in the dark and infants attempt to balance large balls in wheelbarrows so they do not fall out. These activities are effective in developing children's physical skills, self-confidence and fitness levels. However, there is no equipment or opportunities for more able children to develop their climbing skills. All children are encouraged to move their bodies in a variety of ways, for example, they sing action songs and rhymes as they jump, stamp, wriggle and dance.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright, well maintained setting which staff make attractive and welcoming. They create a stimulating environment by making good use of the available space to display children's work and put out a range of toys and equipment each session. This helps to develop children's sense of belonging and interest in learning. The environment is well organised, helping children to move around safely and independently. This is further enhanced through purposeful resources which enable children to learn and extend their play in a variety of different ways. The good range and quality of toys and equipment are monitored for their safety. This offers the children of all age groups an accessible, safe and stimulating environment.

Children have the use of a sensory room with lights, sounds, mobiles and soft furnishings. Staff effectively use the room to promote children's sensory development. For example, children use the microphone and listen to their own voice. This helps children to become confident at speaking out loud and to find their own voice.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place which are effective in promoting safety. These include detailed risk assessments which are reviewed and carried out in all areas inside and outside. Staff ensure all efforts and precautions are taken to prevent accidents happening. For example, toddlers can climb over the tunnel and sit astride it, but know they must not kneel on it as they might fall off. Any accidents that do occur are recorded, however, not all entries are signed by parents.

Older children are made aware of their own safety by good explanations regarding issues, such as why they must not put knives in their mouth at lunchtime. Toddlers regularly access the dustpan and brush to sweep up sand off the floor when they have finished in the sand tray. The setting organised a visit from a lollipop person to discuss road safety with the children. Staff further enhanced this by creating a three dimensional wall display with a zebra crossing, lollipop stick, beacons and the children's pictures. Children interact using the display with their parents when they arrive at and depart from the nursery.

Children's welfare is appropriately protected. The staff have a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the event of identifying a concern. There are suitable child protection procedures and policies in place. This ensures children are safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and well settled in a relaxed and supportive environment. This enables them to develop a positive disposition to learning, and enjoy themselves. They quickly engage in activities on arrival and are secure in the routines of the nursery. Relationships between the staff and children are very good, which contributes to the children's well-being. Staff encourage children of all ages to extend their learning and play opportunities.

Staff make effective use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to inform their planning and practice. Children enjoy stimulating activities and benefit from a good range of natural materials

and experiences to promote their sensory development. This has a positive impact on their concentration levels and they develop an enthusiasm for exploration. For example, staff fill an area of the room with shredded paper for the children to explore. Toddlers happily march around in the area listening and enjoying the sound it makes. They sat down quickly in the paper, moving their arms from side to side to swish the paper around. Great emphasis is placed on singing songs and children enjoy cuddling and rocking dolls whilst they sing 'Miss Polly'. Toddlers approach staff with books to look at together and older children become engrossed as they listen to stories, as they sit together with their mouths open wide as they wait to hear the ending. These activities capture their interests and contribute strongly to the children's developing communication skills.

Children's work is displayed in the rooms and around the building. They are able to recognise their own work. For example, children are able to identify their own model fireworks hanging from the ceiling and talk about the colours and patterns. This results in developing children's self-esteem and sense of pride in their achievements.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn effectively. Their confident and enthusiastic manner contributes towards the children being active and successful learners.

Plans reflect a broad range of interesting activities across the six areas of learning and clearly link to the stepping stones. Staff work well as a team and make good use of their time. They deploy themselves very effectively to encourage, question and challenge children's thinking. This helps the children become focused. There is good use of differentiation to ensure that more able children are challenged and less able children are supported. Children move on at their own pace, which is well documented. They have a good interest in learning, which is enhanced by the very good resources and play opportunities that are provided by staff. This ensures that the children are motivated and interested.

Children settle well into the nursery and show a sense of belonging as they greet staff and each other. They make friends and develop their self-esteem well. The children display increasing self-confidence and independence, freely selecting equipment for themselves and putting on their own coats before going outside. They take responsibility for their personal care and can pour their own drinks independently both during play and at snack times. The children use their self-help skills to help themselves to snacks as they cut up fruit and spread soft cheese on crackers.

Children are good communicators and speak confidently. They are introduced to new vocabulary through 'words of the week' such as airport, cargo, fly, petrol, passengers, railway tracks, path, transport, vehicles and wheel. Children then begin to confidently use this during role-play. For example, 'we are on the train going to the station to pick up some more passengers'. Staff frequently link sounds to letters, for example, 'g for goat'. Older children are beginning to formulate some letters effectively as they sign themselves in and write their name on their driving licence. They listen intently to stories and develop an enjoyment in books.

Fun activities promote children's mathematical thinking. Children confidently count to ten and decide how many gallons of petrol they would like in their car, during role-play. They use mathematical language, such as long and short, routinely in their play, as they talk about the size of the different sausages they have rolled out with play-dough. The use of numbers in their play is supported by action songs and games.

During daily discussions at circle time, children show a good awareness of change and what is happening around them. They make accurate assessments about transport and talk about whether the different forms of transport go on the road or not. They confidently build with a purpose in mind as they use blocks to make stairs to reach their hanging models. Children show an interest in technology. They use the computers independently and have good mouse control. Children's awareness of cultural diversity is enhanced through the selection of resources and planned activities. For example, they make Chinese flags for international day.

Children initiate creative play themselves through access to the paints, creative materials, sand, water and malleable activities. There is a variety of equipment for construction which stimulates the children's design skills. For example, they make elaborate fireworks and rockets through junk modelling. Children participate enthusiastically in songs and actions in small and larger groups. The well resourced role play area is altered regularly to stimulate the children's imagination. They express and communicate their ideas well when acting out role play situations. Children move confidently around the setting and are aware of the space and obstacles around them. They have a range of tools that support and develop their fine motor skills, for example, through malleable materials, jigsaws, pens, brushes and scissors.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children from a variety of backgrounds are warmly welcomed and their individual needs are well met. They feel valued because staff create an environment where they are treated fairly, equally and with respect, which ensures that the children develop a sense of belonging and trust. Children are greeted eagerly by their friends as they run up to one another. They select from photographs of themselves to indicate whether they feel happy or sad, and explain their feelings. This helps them feel good about themselves.

The good quality resources and activities provide the children with some good opportunities to start to develop their insight into the wider world. They have access to many books which reflect positive images of people from other religions and cultures and gain further insight through topic work about different festivals such as Eid. The nursery has a positive attitude towards providing an inclusive environment. They work with parents and other agencies when required to ensure that children with learning difficulties or disabilities are dealt with in a multi-agency approach.

Children are well behaved and develop a positive self-esteem. Staff act as good role models and use effective techniques to divert their attention. Children show care and concern towards others as staff adopt a calm approach to promote respectful relationships. Emphasis is placed on sharing and being kind. They enjoy helping each other, for example, to carry boxes of toys.

Frequent use of praise supports children's efforts and fosters their self-confidence. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Open and friendly relationships with parents contribute to meeting children's needs successfully. Staff and parents are relaxed in one another's company and detailed information is provided and shared. Good opportunities are available for parents to become involved in their children's learning. Children take their creative work and photographs of themselves home with them so that their experiences can be remembered and shared with family members. Weekly newsletters engage parents in their children's learning by encouraging them to be involved in activities that can be done at home. Plans, topics and activities are displayed in all areas for parents to view.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Recruitment and vetting procedures are sufficiently rigorous and robust to ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with relevant experience, knowledge and skills. Appropriate induction procedures for staff are in place. Staff training and development is promoted within the provision and staff have access to training courses. As a result staff are well motivated, work well as a team and act as good role models. Space and resources are organised well. Children initiate their own play freely and show good levels of independence.

Adult to child ratios are maintained and positively support children's care, learning and play. Group size and staff deployment contribute appropriately to children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement. Staff have high regard for the well-being of all children and are attentive to their needs; children receive good adult support and attention.

Documentation is reasonably well organised to maintain an effective service to ensure children's well-being. However, there are some minor omissions in record keeping, for example, not all children's attendance is accurately recorded. A range of comprehensive policies and procedures promotes positive outcomes for children.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The outcomes for the children are good due to the effective teacher, who has a secure knowledge of how children learn and plans well for their individual needs. However, the leadership and management has recently changed and there are no systems in place to evaluate the service as a whole and monitor key staff with responsibilities for nursery education. The setting works well with outside agencies to ensure that all children's needs are met appropriately and the new management team are committed to the ongoing assessment and development of the provision.

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 complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- provide opportunities for children to serve snacks and drinks, and ensure parents sign the medication record to acknowledge the entry
- ensure all entries within the accident record are signed by parents
- ensure the registers record the hours of attendance of children.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- provide more opportunities to challenge children's climbing skills
- implement a system to ensure leaders and managers evaluate the service as a whole and monitor key staff with responsibilities.

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