Childcare in the Community - Whitehill Neighbourhood Centre
Day Care of Children
9 Hunter Road
Whitehill
Hamilton  ML3 0LH

Inspected by:  Lynn Clements
(Care Commission Officer)
Type of inspection:  Unannounced
Inspection completed on:  18 September 2008
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<td>Princess Gate</td>
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<td>60 Castle Street</td>
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Introduction
Childcare in the Community – Whitehill Neighbourhood Centre provides nursery and out of school care provision. This report is based on the inspection of the nursery service.

The nursery service was registered by the Care Commission on 2 February 2006 to provide to provide a care service to a maximum of 25 children at any one time aged from 0 to those not yet attending primary school.

The care service operates 8am to 6pm, 52 weeks of the year. Sessional and full time places were offered, Monday to Friday.

The service operates from Whitehill Neighbourhood Centre, Hamilton, South Lanarkshire. The premises comprise of one main playroom accessed by a controlled door system. Kitchen, cloakroom and toilet facilities are also available. The spacious outdoor play area can be accessed directly from the playroom.

The service aims:
“To provide quality, affordable, flexible childcare.”

The full statement of the aims and objectives of the service is available to carers.

This report was written following an unannounced inspection carried out by Elizabeth Munro and Lynn Clements, Care Commission Officers, on Thursday 18 September 2008 between the times of 10:15 am and 3 pm. Both Officers also visited the organisation’s main office on 2 July 2008 and 17 July 2008 as part of the inspection process. Verbal feedback was given to the Nursery Manager and the external Service Manager at the end of the inspection.

Based on the findings of this inspection the service has been awarded the following grades:
Quality of Care and Support - 1 - Unsatisfactory
Quality of Environment - 1 - Unsatisfactory
Quality of Staffing - 1 - Unsatisfactory
Quality of Management and Leadership - 2 - Weak

This inspection report and grades represent the Care Commission’s assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. Please refer to the care services register on the Care Commission’s website (www.carecommission.com) for the most up-to-date grades for this service.

Basis of Report

Before the inspection:

The Annual Return
The service submitted a completed Annual Return as requested by the Care Commission.

The Self-Assessment Form
The service submitted a self-assessment form as requested by the Care Commission
Views of service users
Thirty care standards questionnaires were issued and eleven were returned before the inspection took place. Care standard questionnaires give carers the opportunity to comment on the quality of the service.

Regulation Support Assessment
The inspection plan for this service was decided after a Regulation Support Assessment (RSA) was carried out to determine the intensity of inspection necessary. The RSA is an assessment undertaken by the Care Commission Officer (CCO) which considers complaints activity, changes in the provision of the service, nature of notifications made to the Care Commission by the service (such as absence of a manager) and action taken upon requirements. The CCO will also have considered how the service responded to situations and issues as part of the RSA.

This assessment resulted in this service receiving a medium RSA score and so a medium intensity inspection was required. The inspection was based on the relevant Inspection Focus Areas and associated National Care Standards, recommendations and requirements from previous inspections and complaints or other regulatory activity.

During the inspection process

Evidence was gathered from a number of sources.

A review of a range of policies, procedures, records and other documentation, including the following:

- Registration certificate
- Certificate of insurance
- Behaviour policy
- Child protection policy
- Equal opportunities policy
- Infection control procedures
- Risk assessments
- Complaints procedure
- Whistle blowing policy
- Staff records

Discussion took place with the Service and Nursery Managers, three care staff and one carer. The Officers chatted to children informally during the course of their play. Observation took place of staff childcare practices and there was a general review of environment and resources available.

All of the above information was taken into account during the inspection process and was reported on.

The inspection also took account of The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002 (SSI 2002/114).

Inspection Focus Areas and links to Quality Themes and Statements for 2008/09. Inspection focus areas of Child Protection and Notifications are also reported on.

Inspection Focus Areas and links to Quality Themes and Statements for 2008/09
Details of the inspection focus and associated Quality Themes to be used in inspecting each type of care service in 2008/09 and supporting inspection guidance, can be found at: http://www.carecommission.com/

Fire Safety Issues
The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 introduced new regulatory arrangements in respect of fire safety, on 1 October 2006. In terms of those arrangements, responsibility for enforcing the statutory provisions in relation to fire safety now lies with the Fire and Rescue service for the area in which a care service is located. Accordingly, the Care Commission will no longer report on matters of fire safety as part of its regulatory function, but, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, will alert the relevant Fire and Rescue service to their existence in order that it may act as it considers appropriate. Further advice on your responsibilities is available at www.infoscotland.com/firelaw

Action taken on requirements since last Inspection
The Care Commission received an action plan from the service detailing how it would meet the requirement arising from the last inspection.

1. Adult child ratios as detailed on the certificate of registration must be adhered to.

Adult child ratios were reviewed and were satisfactory therefore this requirement has been met.

Information about complaints that have been upheld or partially upheld can be found on the Care Commission website.

Comments on Self Assessment
The service submitted a fully completed self assessment form. This was completed to a satisfactory standard and gave relevant information for each of the Quality Themes and Statements. The service identified strengths and areas for future development and provided good evidence of service user involvement and how they planned to implement changes.

View of Service Users
Sixteen children aged 0-3 were present during the inspection. The children appeared comfortable with the staff and at times with each other. They approached the Officers on several occasions and chatted informally, some children pointed out their art work displayed on the wall.

View of Carers
Views of carers are also incorporated throughout this report.

Eleven care standards questionnaires were received giving carers an opportunity to comment on how the service provided privacy, dignity, choice, safety, realising potential and equality and diversity.

The questionnaires demonstrated that:
- Two carers thought there was not enough space for children to get involved.
- Five carers didn’t know whether staff regularly assessed their child’s learning and development.
- Two carers strongly disagreed that well balanced snacks were provided.

Overall, eight carers strongly agreed they were happy with the quality of care their child receives.

Written comments included:

“My child is very happy at this nursery and the staff are mature and this makes my happy to leave my child there”.

“I am more than confident leaving my child who is happy and content. I have noticed a change for the better in her development and my child is more interactive with other people”.

“The staff at Whitehill put their hearts into their work and this reflects on the children”. My child is 18 months old and loves going to nursery, on occasion he hasn't wanted to come home”

“There was no opportunity to speak to the establishment before my child attended. I feel that the staff are not qualified to provide emotional support, the staff do teach my child colours but I do not feel there is provision to help him learn. Training for some of the staff in pre school preparation would be beneficial”.

“The service requires more qualified staff, they do utilise the local park, however this appears to be a time where staff relax and the children are left to their own devices. Management do not seem equipped with suitable skills, especially in dealing with fees and paperwork”.

“I don’t like the way some of the staff speak as my child picks up on this which I am continually correcting”.
Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 1 - Unsatisfactory

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

Service Strengths

Carers were provided with a record of their child's day that included food consumption, sleep pattern and activities that children have participated in. These included informal daily verbal exchanges of information with carers giving them the opportunity to comment on their child's care needs make requests or raise any concerns as necessary.

A written Partnership with Parents policy had been established.

Areas for Development

The service did not use a variety of methods to gain the views of both children and carers. Five carers thought the service did not involve them or their child in development of the service or provision of feedback. (See recommendation 1).

Meetings with carers to discuss their child's progress had not commenced. The staff do not value or take account of carer's points of view or ensure that carers contribute to the evaluation of the Service's work in accordance with the Partnership with parent's policy. (See recommendation 2).

The service recorded in their self assessment strengths against this quality statement that included:
- Information to carers is updated regularly by newsletter
- The Complaints procedure was clearly displayed for carers.

At inspection staff confirmed that newsletters had not yet been issued. The complaints procedure was not displayed. (See recommendation 3 & 4).

Following discussion with the staff, management and children, and a review of documentation this service was found to have a weak performance in relation to this statement.

CCO Grading

2 - Weak

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

4

Statement 3: We ensure that service user's health and wellbeing needs are met.
**Service Strengths**

The aims and objectives of the service were available in a written format and reflected the intentions of the service. Other policies and procedures had been established to support the practice of promoting personal hygiene with children, infection control, health and safety, child protection and emergency procedures.

Staff demonstrated knowledge of infection control procedures and reminded children to wash their hands. The children and staff participated in a national tooth brushing scheme. Appropriate facilities were available to store the children's packed lunches.

Staff comforted children when they became upset. Carers confirmed that their child appeared happy and confident with the staff. One staff member offered the children a choice at snack time and asked whether they would like to wear a protective apron during lunch.

Staff received in-house updated annual training on child protection. The service had copies of the Children's Charter and the Framework for Standards for child protection.

**Areas for Development**

Some used nappies placed in the nappy bin were not bagged in accordance with service procedures. (See recommendation 5).

The Child Protection policy did not state that the service would follow the local area child protection guidelines. (See Recommendation 6)

Following discussion with staff and children, observation and a review of documentation the service was found to have an adequate performance in relation to this statement.

**CCO Grading**

3 - Adequate

**Number of Requirements**

0

**Number of Recommendations**

2

**Statement 4: We use a range of communication methods to ensure we meet the needs of service users.**

**Service Strengths**

Information about the children's day was provided to carers and included verbal and written feedback. See quality statement 1.1.

Carers confirmed that information about their child is kept confidentially.

The information board located at the entrance area informs carers about some policies and
Areas for Development

Two carers felt they were not kept informed. (See recommendation 2).

During inspection one staff member raised their voice when communicating with the children on several occasions. The manager confirmed that she was aware of this practice. There was no evidence to demonstrate that children were praised by staff. Staff communication with children during the inspection was unhelpful and had a negative impact on their behaviour. The routine was chaotic and unorganised and there was a lack of activities and resources available. Children were not actively engaged. (See requirement 2).

There was no attempt made by staff to communicate with a child whose first language was not English. Staff had not acknowledged the child’s background or culture. (See requirement 1).

Following discussion with staff and children, observation and a review of documentation the service was found to have an unsatisfactory performance in relation to this statement.

CCO Grading

1 - Unsatisfactory

Number of Requirements

2

Number of Recommendations

0
Quality Theme 2: Quality of Environment

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 1 - Unsatisfactory

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the environment within the service.

Service Strengths

See also Quality Statement 1.1.

Areas for Development

See recommendation 1.

CCO Grading

2 - Weak

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 3: The environment allows service users to have as positive a quality of life as possible.

Service Strengths

The premises were secure and carers were required to sign their children in and out of the service.

Good examples of children's art work and photographs of activities or outings were attractively displayed.

Areas for Development

Staff did not encourage the children to tidy up.

The overall environment was unacceptable and impacted on the ethos in the playroom. The layout of the playroom did not encourage the children to play safely. Children ran about aimlessly mainly without direction or instruction from staff. The layout did contain a quiet area and house corner however it was not possible for children to fully utilise these areas as the play and routine were chaotic, unorganised and of poor quality for the staff and children. (See recommendation 7).

Staff stated they encouraged free play however this was haphazard and did not encourage positive purposeful play; children were repeatedly upset, involved in minor accidents and destroyed each others work. The layout and environment impacted on children's behaviour, children were hitting each other which went unnoticed by staff.
The tables at times did not contain toys or resources for the children. Some resources were not easily accessible to the children. (See recommendation 8).

Staff interviewed thought that the routine, environment and resources and overall ethos of the playroom could be improved.

Following discussion with staff and children and observation of practice the service was found to have an unsatisfactory performance in relation to this statement.

**CCO Grading**

1 - Unsatisfactory

**Number of Requirements**

0

**Number of Recommendations**

2

**Statement 5: The accommodation and resources are suitable for the needs of the service users.**

**Service Strengths**

See quality statement 2.3

Children and staff were familiar with the accommodation and the resources.

Some carers thought the service had a suitable range of equipment and resources.

**Areas for Development**

See recommendations 7 & 8.

Two carers did not think the service had a suitable range of equipment and one carer didn't know if the service had a suitable range of equipment. (See recommendation 1 & 7).

Following discussion with staff and children and observation of practice the service was found to have a weak performance in relation to this statement.

**CCO Grading**

2 - Weak

**Number of Requirements**

0

**Number of Recommendations**
Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 1 - Unsatisfactory

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

Service Strengths

See Quality Statement 1.1

Carers gave their view about the staff. Comments included: "The staff at Whitehill put their hearts into their work and this reflects on the children".

Areas for Development

See Quality Statement 1.1

One carer said they were unhappy with the quality of care their child receives. (See recommendation 1).

Following discussion with staff and children and observation of practice the service was found to have a weak performance in relation to this statement.

CCO Grading

2 - Weak

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 3: We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice.

Service Strengths

A review of records and documents indicated that new staff completed an induction programme and had opportunities for further training. They had clear job remits and were familiar with the each other and the children present. Regular staff/management meetings took place giving staff opportunities to share new ideas and practice with colleagues.

Some carers confirmed they were confident that there was always enough staff in the service.

Staff confirmed appraisals are carried out annually.

Staff had attended a variety of training including child protection, food handling and first aid.
Areas for Development

More that 50% of the staff were unqualified which impacted on the quality of care and support provided to the children. (See requirement 3).

The planning sheets did not demonstrate that the activities carried out with children had been competently evaluated by staff; next steps for development were not recorded; the age group of the children was not recorded. The staff informed that these were checked by the Nursery Manager. (See recommendation 9)

The Officer observed two activities. The activities were not enjoyable experiences for the staff, the playroom was too noisy and most of the children were running around. One quiet activity was carried out at the snack table, children aged 1-2 were asked to sit for a prolonged period of time after completing a painting activity. Some children appeared uninterested and joined and left the activity throughout. The remaining children were segregated by furniture and shouted continuously to the staff who did not respond to the children. A 'sticky kids' tape was played in an attempt to generate a group activity. Children were unresponsive; the member of staff tried to encourage the children but did not persist. Overall both activities did not meet the needs of the young children. (See recommendation 10).

On occasion the remarks made by staff about the children in their care were unprofessional and detrimental to meeting the child's communication needs. (See recommendation 11)

Some staff interviewed demonstrated a limited understanding of the provision of early years day-care and how they would meet children's developmental needs.

The manager did not have regular or meaningful support from senior management. The manager had not accessed training in relation to their role and responsibilities. (See Recommendation 14).

Following discussion with staff and children and a review of documentation the service was found to have an unsatisfactory performance in relation to this statement.

CCO Grading

1 - Unsatisfactory

Number of Requirements

1

Number of Recommendations

4

Statement 4: We ensure that everyone working in the service has an ethos of respect towards service users and each other.

Service Strengths

Staff meetings are held.
Some carers spoke positively about the staff.

**Areas for Development**

During the inspection staff present did not work well together they were unaware of each others actions and there was a lack of communication. One member of staff asked a child why they were upset and did not know that the child had been removed from the table by another member of staff. Staff did not demonstrate respect for their colleagues. (See recommendation 12).

A staff member was observed lifting and moving a child in an unacceptable manner. (See requirement 4).

The Nursery Manager did not effectively or routinely monitor staff. The Nursery Manager was aware of one member of staff raising their voice but had not addressed with this issue appropriately. (See requirement 5)

There had been an incident of misconduct concerning one member of staff which had been investigated by the service and nursery managers. The outcome was not determined and feedback had not been conveyed to the staff member. Follow up on the incident had not occurred until six months later. (See requirement 6)

The service failed to notify the Care Commission where staff were involved in serious incidents of misconduct. (See requirement 7)

The Staff Training/Development policy did not include the following key components:

- Induction planning for newly appointed staff or staff post changes within the organisation
- Application of learning within the workplace
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of learning. (See Recommendation 13).

Following discussion with staff and children and a review of documentation the service was found to have an unsatisfactory performance in relation to this statement.

**CCO Grading**

1 - Unsatisfactory

**Number of Requirements**

4

**Number of Recommendations**

2
Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Overall CCO Theme Grading: 2 - Weak

Statement 1: We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the management and leadership of the service.

Service Strengths

See Quality Statement 1.1

Areas for Development

See recommendation 1.

Following discussion with staff and children and observation of practice the service was found to have a weak performance in relation to this statement.

CCO Grading

2 - Weak

Number of Requirements

0

Number of Recommendations

0

Statement 2: We involve our workforce in determining the direction and future objectives of the service.

Service Strengths

Staff attend staff meetings where objectives and service direction were discussed.

Areas for Development

The nursery manager and staff had not prepared for the inspection staff were unaware about the self assessment document or the quality themes and statements.

Feedback from staff had not been formally sought by the management team. Following discussion with staff and children and a review of documentation the service was found to have a weak performance in relation to this quality statement.

CCO Grading

2 - Weak

Number of Requirements

0
Number of Recommendations
0

Statement 4: We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide.

Service Strengths

Carers' were invited to attend the annual general meeting of the organisation.

A corporate plan for the whole organisation had been established which was intended to influence individual service development plans.

Areas for Development

The service did not yet have a specific development plan.

The nursery manager was based in the nursery in the mornings there was no evidence that the Manager supported, managed or supervised staff. The manager was not present in the playroom to support the staff during the inspection visit.

The service identified in the self-assessment a need to improve systems of quality assurance.

Following discussion with staff and children and a review of documentation the service was found to have a weak performance in relation to this quality statement.

CCO Grading

2 - Weak

Number of Requirements
0

Number of Recommendations
0
Regulations / Principles

National Care Standards
Enforcement
There has been no enforcement action against this service since the last inspection.

Other Information

Six recommendations were made following the last inspection as follows:

1. The service should ensure its review of the child protection policy reflects the key areas, as specified.
   National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing.
   One component of this recommendation remains outstanding and is referred to in Quality Statement 1.3 of this report. (See Recommendation 6)

2. Staff, children and carers should be made aware of the Children's Charter and the Framework for Standards for Child Protection.
   National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing.
   All documents are visible in the service therefore this recommendation is considered met.

3. The organisation should continue to liaise with the landlord to ensure the toilet facilities are adequate for the children at all times.
   National Care Standards Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 3: Health and Wellbeing.
   A review of the toilet area occurred and overall they were adequate for the children therefore this recommendation is considered met.

4. Meetings between staff and carers should be held on a regular basis. National care standards for early education and childcare up to the age of 16, standard 5, quality of experience.

   Meetings between staff and carers do not occur therefore this recommendation remains outstanding and is referred to in Quality Statement 1.1 of this report. (See recommendation 2).

5. The staff development and training policy should be reviewed and updated.
   National Care Standards, Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 12 - Confidence in Staff.

   The policy did not include some key components therefore this recommendation remains outstanding and is referred to in Quality Statement 3.4 of this report. (See recommendation 13).

6. Senior management should improve communications with service staff by arranging regular minuted meetings.
   National Care Standards, Early Education and Childcare up to the age of 16: Standard 12 - Confidence in Staff.

   Regular staff meetings do occur therefore this recommendation is considered met.
Requirements

1. Staff must take account of all children in their care including children from other cultures and backgrounds. This is in order to comply with SSI 2002/114, Regulation 4(1)(a) & (d) - Providers shall make proper provision for the health and welfare of service users and provide services in a manner which respects the privacy and dignity of service users.

Timescale for implementation: 24 hours of the issuing of this report.

2. Management must review how staff communicate with children to ensure that children are praised and that raised voices are not used by staff as a method of communication. Staff must also promote children’s self-esteem and review the language used in caring for the children. This is in order to comply with SSI 2002/114, Regulation 4(1)(a) & (d) - Providers shall make proper provision for the health and welfare of service users and provide services in a manner which respects the privacy and dignity of service users.

Timescale for implementation: 1 week of the issuing of this report.

3. At any time more than 50% of the staff caring for children must be qualified. This is in order to comply with SSI 2002/114, Regulation 13(a) - A provider shall, having regard to the size and nature of the service, the statement of aims and objectives and the number and needs of service users and ensure that at all times suitably qualified and competent persons are working in the care service in such numbers as are appropriate for the health and welfare of service users.

Timescale for implementation: 2 weeks of the issuing of this report.

4. Children must not be roughly handled at any time. This is in order to comply with SSI 2002/114, Regulation 4(1)(a) & (d) - Providers shall make proper provision for the health and welfare of service users and provide services in a manner which respects the privacy and dignity of service users.

Timescale for implementation: immediate of the issuing of this report.

5. Staffs work and conduct must be formally monitored by the Nursery Manager on a regular basis. All issues relating to staff must be speedily and competently dealt with. This is in order to comply with SSI 2002/114, Regulation 7(1)(d) - A person shall not act as a manager in relation to a care service unless the person is fit to do so. - a person who does not have the skills, knowledge and experience necessary for managing the care service.

Timescale for implementation: 2 months of the issuing of this report.

6. All investigations concerning staff must be formally recorded and an outcome to the investigation must be established. All parties must be kept up to date at all times. This is in order to comply with SSI 2002/114, Regulation 19(2)(e) - A provider shall keep a record of all persons employed in the provision of the service, specifying in each case any disciplinary action which the employer has taken against the person, including the outcome of any such action.

Timescale for implementation: immediate of the issuing of this report.

7. The service must notify the Care Commission when a serious incident involving a staff member had occurred. This is in order to comply with SSI 2002/114, Regulation 21(2)(d) - A
provider shall give notice to the Commission without delay of the occurrence of any allegation of misconduct by the provider or any person who is employed in the care service.

Timescale for implementation: immediate of the issuing of this report.

**Recommendations**

1. The service should consider further methods of involving carers and children in assessing and improving the quality of care and support, quality of the environment, quality of staffing, quality of management and leadership. Quality themes 1, 2, 3 & 4 - quality statements 1.1, 2.1, 3.1 & 4.1.

2. The partnership with parent's policy should be applied by staff. Meetings with carers to discuss their child's progress should commence. Carers should be regularly kept informed. Quality theme 1 - care & support, quality statement 1.1.

3. The self assessment returned by the service should only include strengths that have taken place. Quality theme 1 - care & support, quality statement 1.1.

4. The complaints procedure should be displayed for carers. Quality theme 1 - care & support, quality statement 1.1.

5. Nappies must be appropriately disposed of in accordance with service procedures. Quality theme 1 - care & support, quality statement 1.3.

6. The service should amend the child protection policy to reflect that the provider will follow the local area child protection guidelines. Quality theme 1 - care & support, quality statement 1.3.

7. The management and staff should review the layout of the environment and resources and ensure these are provided in accordance with children's individual needs. Quality theme 2 - environment, quality statement 2.3.

8. The management and staff should review the routine and types of play encouraged to reduce the risk of accidents and upset children. All equipment should be fully utilised and easily accessible. Quality theme 2 - environment, quality statement 2.3.

9. The planning sheets should demonstrate competent evaluation of activities and next steps of children's learning and development. Quality theme 3- staffing, quality statement 3.3.

10. All activities should suit the individual needs of the children present. Quality theme 3-staffing, quality statement 3.3.

11. Staff should review communication and ensure that detrimental remarks made about children do not occur. Quality theme 3- staffing, quality statement 3.3.

12. Staff should attend training to encourage and promote good team work. Quality theme 3-staffing, quality statement 3.4.

13. The staff training policy should contain key components as detailed in this report. Quality theme 3- staffing, quality statement 3.4.
14. Senior management should take appropriate steps to ensure the day to day Manager is fully supported in their role and further training should be accessed to enable the Nursery Manager to implement responsibilities associated with the Management role. Quality theme 4- staffing, quality statement 4.4.

Lynn Clements
Care Commission Officer