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Mrs S Farber  
Laurel Way Playgroup  
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Dear Susan

**Ofsted survey inspection programme - the impact of leadership and management in full day care on outcomes for children and their families**

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 14/01/2008.

As outlined in my initial letter, the visit had a particular focus on the links between leadership and management and outcomes for children and their families and looked at the recruitment and retention of staff, their qualifications and skills, and their roles in leadership and management.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing settings but individual settings will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with you the proprietor, staff, parents, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of children's records and observations of several sessions, including one focused group activity and during free choice.

The overall effectiveness of the impact of leadership and management was judged to be **Outstanding**.

**The impact of leadership and management on outcomes for children and their families is outstanding**

- Children's health & safety is paramount. Children are exceptionally well cared for throughout the day by trained and highly motivated staff that have children's best interest at heart.
- The proprietor places great emphasis on encouraging all children to be involved and make decisions in their learning and play.
- All children make excellent progress; because planning is adapted daily and covers all areas of learning. Weekly evaluation of the planning means all children make excellent progress.

- The proprietor has developed a staff team who are confident and skilled to promote children to become independent learners whilst covering all of the learning outcomes based on Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Children make rapid progress in their learning as much is self initiated.
- Outcomes for children are exceptional as staff means are skilled at providing a wealth of stimulating often child lead activities following their natural interests. Staff extend children's thinking and learning exceptionally well by the extensive range of teaching and questioning techniques.
- The proprietor has a very effective range of communication systems to ensure parents feel involved. Their views' and suggestions are acted upon positively and with rigour.
- "One more step" transitional records give parents excellent opportunities to be involved in information they would like to pass on to school about their child, a copy of this is given to them on a Compact Disc.

### **The impact of leadership and management on the quality of what the setting provides is outstanding**

- The proprietor has a excellent understanding of what she wants to achieve and involves all the staff equally in promoting this.
- The proprietor recognises the importance of having qualified staff to enhance the quality of the service provided. All staff are qualified and regular training opportunities are available. Staff have opportunities to share their newly acquired knowledge with the staff team
- The proprietor has a clear vision and ethos of the setting. She is committed to providing outstanding care and learning for the children. As a result the setting regularly takes part in pilot schemes for the local authority which impacts greatly on the exceptional care children receive.
- Staff provide children with excellent opportunities to develop their natural curiosity, explore, and investigate through a wealth of highly stimulating play experiences.
- The proprietor is passionate about providing a holistic approach to children learning. Children are involved in wonderful opportunities to learn about the natural environment, as they recycle food and materials, grow vegetables on the allotment and are fascinated by the wormery.
- Children benefit enormously from the freedom to make independent choices whether to play inside or outdoors. They are able to play outside in all weathers where indoor learning is extended.
- Although no formal key worker system operates the uniqueness of the small setting, the established staff group and their dedication and commitment to putting children first means children's individual needs are exceptionally well met.

### **The impact of leadership and management on inclusion is outstanding**

- The setting has excellent relationships with the local authority inclusion team. They are taking part in a pilot scheme called Small Circles to support children with speech and language difficulties.
- Some staff have received training to care for children with learning difficulties and disabilities and the setting has a named special needs coordinator.
- Staff's exceptional understanding of child development and how children learn means that any concerns are quickly identified and prompt steps are taken to ensure appropriate support is provided
- There are appropriate systems in place to make all families feel included. The setting provides a flexible service to meet the varying social and economic needs of families within the local community.

### **The overall quality of leadership and management is outstanding**

- The proprietor has excellent evaluation systems in place and uses these exceptionally well to make continuous improvements to enhance the care and learning children receive.
- The proprietor is part of a quality assurance scheme and has achieved Investors in Children status.
- The proprietor has a clear vision and ethos for the setting and the inspirational qualities of the proprietor's leadership enthuse the staff, they work exceptionally well together complimenting each other skills and experiences.
- The proprietor provides a positive working environment where all staff work equally, feel valued and are directly involved in decision making. As a result most of the staff team are very established and consequently provide high levels of continuity in care for children.
- The proprietor holds yearly reviews with staff and completes regular observations on their practice.
- The proprietor places high emphasis on training and most staff are currently undertaking a higher level childcare qualification.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:**

None noted other than to continue to use the highly effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision to sustain the excellent quality and care provided.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop your provision for children and their families

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to the Director of Children's Services in Barnet and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the inspector that carries out your next inspection.

Yours sincerely  
***Hilary Turner***  
**Inspector**