

Lyvennet Nursery Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	317556
Inspection date	28 November 2007
Inspector	Andrea, Marie Paulson
Setting Address	Crosby, Ravensworth, Penrith, Cumbria, CA10 3JJ
Telephone number	01931 715 265
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Registered person	The Trustee's of Lyvennet Nursery Group
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 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?

The nursery group opened in 1992. The premises comprises two nursery playrooms and an enclosed, outdoor play area within Crosby Ravensworth Primary School. It serves a mainly rural community with the majority of children moving on to the school. There are currently seven children on roll including four who receive nursery education funding. The nursery group has experience of caring for children who have learning difficulties and disabilities. No children attend for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery group opens four days a week during term time. Sessions are from 09.00 to 11.30 on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and from 13.00 to 15.30 on Thursday. The manager is qualified and experienced in early years care and education. The two part-time staff members are qualified to the equivalent of National Vocational Qualification level 2 and 3, with one member of staff working towards level 3. The nursery group is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because the nursery staff work closely with parents to share individual health and dietary needs which are recorded and followed so that each child is cared for well. They are provided with varied, nutritious snacks and water is available throughout the day in individual bottles. Children rest and are active according to how they feel.

Children show a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy as they follow hygienic practices as a matter of routine. They 'wash germs off their hands' ready for snack time and before decorating a gingerbread house. Children learn that the play areas are kept clean as they tidy up and put aprons away on the pegs. They learn about their bodies and know that putting a coat on will keep them warm outside. Their understanding is demonstrated as they put a blanket around the baby as 'it's a bit cold'.

Children have regular physical activities in which they participate enthusiastically. The staff provide fun indoor play which includes dancing and action songs. The playrooms are limited in space for whole group physical activities so the school hall is used when available. The children have also used the village hall for music and movement. The outdoor area has adventure playground equipment where children develop skills in climbing and balancing, along with coordination when using balls and ride-on toys. They develop fine movement skills and coordination as they use crayons, scissors, paintbrushes and thread beads. Children learn to negotiate space well. The development of movement skills is very well promoted.

Children enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks which include fruit, such as apples and pears, and crackers. Children's understanding of why nutritious food is good for them is promoted well through much conversation. They know that milk and fruit help them grow 'big and strong'. Staff encourage children to eat fruit when they see who can make a 'crunchy' sound with the apple. Children know that 'too many sweets' can 'make my tummy ache and make teeth bad'. Snack times are social occasions where staff members are good role models in encouraging good manners, healthy eating habits and social interaction as children talk with adults and each other.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the nursery which is warm, welcoming, bright and colourful. The premises are well maintained to provide a secure environment where children are safe. Staff show a high level of awareness through risk assessments and regular checking of the premises. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place to protect children. The risk assessments cover all areas of the premises, resources and taking children on outings.

Effective systems are in place to monitor entry to and from the nursery. The ratio of staff to children is exceptional so further supporting the safety of children in the nursery through close supervision. Resources and furniture are arranged in a way that enables children to access resources easily and move around freely. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they practise the emergency evacuation so that the procedure is familiar to them. They understand that wearing helmets helps to protect heads and are aware not to go with strangers even if they are given sweets.

Staff have a good knowledge of current child protection issues and procedures. Child protection is an integral part of training plans for nursery staff, which indicates the level of commitment that the nursery has to the protection of children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, relaxed and learning to be confident. Staff are actively involved with children throughout the session. The good relationship fostered helps children feel settled and participate well. They are confident as they initiate a hide and seek game with adults. Children concentrate well as they try to remember a sequence of objects in the 'one man went to mow' song. They are challenged and learn new skills such as how to take photographs with the digital camera. The key worker system is instrumental in promoting individual progress through the nursery so that all children achieve well.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of all areas of children's learning. Activities are based on the early learning goals and staff are already working towards the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. They create a rich and challenging learning environment and are excellent in relating learning to children's own experiences, so making learning more meaningful. Staff plan well through daily observations and regular meetings to ensure the whole curriculum is covered. They extend individual learning with effective use of assessments. Effective teaching techniques are consistently used to reinforce children's learning, for instance, the topic of 'fantasy houses' threads through many activities. Staff are skilful at extending activities so that all children are challenged, such as making model houses out of different materials and experimenting to see which is the strongest. Children are encouraged to think for themselves, for instance, as they discuss the differences between the seasons.

Their communication skills develop well as they speak confidently at circle time and learn to listen to others. Children enjoy books during whole group story time and in a small group. Although books are well displayed in a quiet corner, the area is not welcoming or comfortable to further promote children's interest. Children learn to recognise letters by shapes and sounds linked to their names and familiar objects. They particularly enjoy singing and at times children can be heard singing spontaneously and making up their own songs. Children enjoy listening to stories which are read out in a lively and expressive way to catch their interest. Their vocabulary is extended as they learn 'kangaroo and zebra' during a Noah's Ark activity. They practise writing skills, for instance, as they use resources on the writing table and try to write their name.

Children have several opportunities to recognise numbers, practise counting and link a symbol to the number of objects. They often practise counting and develop calculating skills as they work out 'how many altogether'. Children recognise shapes well through fun activities, for instance, making a display of 'sophie square' and making star shaped biscuits. They thread beads to make it 'taller' than themselves, so understanding the comparison through practical activities. Children's learning is extended as they discuss 'striped patterns' and compare large, medium and small sizes of the bears.

Children show a great interest in living things through varied activities based on topics, such as the seasons of the year. They plant bulbs and learn that compost and water make them grow

into flowers. Children investigate in fun ways, for example, learning to operate a clockwork mouse and how to take photographs with the digital camera. They learn how things work as they use a mirror to draw self-portraits. Children's Information Technology (IT) skills are well promoted, for instance, they are deft in using the computer mouse as they have easy access to a computer and support from staff.

Children move around confidently and with increasing control. They have regular opportunities to use small and large equipment to develop coordination and manipulation skills. Children enjoy music through songs, music tapes and by making sounds with musical instruments. They enjoy many interesting craft activities, often linked to topics. However, their choice of craft materials is limited. Children learn about colours through art activities and making new colours by mixing paints or play dough. A 'colour village' display was the result of a village tour where children observed 'green and brown trees, blue beck and sky'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children become aware of their own community through interesting topics, including 'people who help us'. They enjoy visits from the fire service and community police. Children have outings to local places such as an animal farm. They have access to interesting resources which reflect the wider world as they enjoy activities based on festivals, such as making candle holders and door hangings. They try out different foods and enjoy dressing up during role play.

All children have the same access to all the resources so that each child fully participates. Children become aware about the needs of others as they learn that guide dogs help people who cannot see. The nursery works with parents and professionals to give additional support when needed so that all children benefit.

Children are very well behaved with staff giving much praise and encouragement to reinforce good behaviour. They are involved in making 'our rules' which include taking care of each other and taking nicely to each other. Children demonstrate responsible behaviour as they put toys back in place and put aprons back on the pegs. They learn to share resources, such as the animals on the play farm, and to take turns at the computer. Children work together as they help each other make gingerbread houses. They develop self-esteem as their work and ideas are valued through encouragement from staff and their pictures being displayed.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Useful ways used to share information with parents about the children's day and their progress include newsletters, display boards and informal talks when collecting children. The 'home to nursery' books promote continuity of children's learning at home and invite comments from parents. Parents are informed about the nursery education curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage. The key workers keep parents informed of children's individual progress.

The friendly atmosphere helps parents feel welcome in the nursery to talk informally with staff. Parents speak positively about the standard of care and the interaction of staff with children. The nursery actively seeks parental input through questionnaires, which are evaluated and acted upon. Policies and procedures are generally thorough and comprehensive and support the nursery's good practices. A minor exception is the complaints policy. Staff, parents and the school work very closely in this small, rural community to maintain the high standard of care and education from which children benefit.

The provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The good standard of childcare is supported through efficient organisation by the conscientious, knowledgeable and experienced manager and staff. The manager has clear aims and expectations for children's individual learning during their time in the nursery. Staff work closely as a team to ensure the smooth running of the sessions so that children grow in confidence as they know the routine. The clear management structure supports staff members who know their roles and responsibilities well. Appraisals and a training programme promote the continuing professional development of staff so that the standard of care is maintained well.

Policies and procedures are mostly comprehensive and well implemented to ensure individual children are cared for appropriately. The nursery employs an exceptional ratio of staff which gives children a particularly high level of individual support. All staff are qualified to either level 2 or 3. Staff care very much about children's welfare and follow nursery practices which protect children, promote their well-being and plan for their individual progress. The recruitment procedure is thorough and well monitored. Staff are well deployed throughout the play areas so that children move freely around while being well supervised.

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

Leadership and management are good. The manager and staff ensure that the Foundation Stage is delivered well through sharing observations and meeting regularly to update planning. Strong leadership helps to ensure that individual progress is monitored so that each child can achieve well. The manager has a clear oversight of the curriculum delivery. She works closely with staff to keep updated with assessing progress made and identifying additional support needed. The outcome is that children progress very well, they are happy and settled and the nursery has built up a good reputation locally.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection, the nursery was recommended to further develop written procedures regarding staff recruitment and roles of committee members. The complaints and child protection policies needed to be updated. This is now achieved so that the quality of care is underpinned by more thorough policies and procedures.

The nursery was also recommended to record all visitors and extend the risk assessments. This is now achieved so that the safety of the children is further improved.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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.

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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):

- update the complaints policy to inform parents that they can contact Ofsted directly and can request to see a complaints record

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):

- further promote children's interest in books by making the book corner more comfortable and welcoming
- promote children's initiative and self-expression further by providing more access to and choice of materials for craft activities.

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