

Sure Start Blyth

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY240604
Inspection date	21/10/2008
Inspector	Janet Fairhurst
Setting address	103 Wright Street, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 1HG
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Sure Start Blyth Nursery, Playgroup and Crèche has been registered since 2002. It is run by the local authority and is located in a purpose-built building near the centre of Blyth. The nursery has separate sections for under and over two year olds, with the crèche/playgroup based in a separate room. All have access to the enclosed outdoor play area and have toilet and nappy changing facilities integral to the rooms. There is a separate staff and parents' room.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 43 children under five years. There are currently 54 children on roll who attend various sessions. The nursery is registered to provide funded nursery education places for those children of eligible age. Opening hours for the nursery are from 08.00 to 18.00 Monday to Thursday and from 08.00 to 17.30 Friday. The playgroup opening hours are from 09.30 to 12.00 Monday to Thursday term-time only and the crèche is organised around specific events where parents need childcare and is open to children under eight years. The nursery is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary elements of the Childcare Register.

There are 11 members of staff, including a manager and a deputy. All are qualified to National Vocational Qualification at level 3 or above.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The setting provides extremely well for all children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where children are highly motivated and extremely well cared for. High priority and commitment is given to inclusion throughout the nursery and its practice. Children's individual needs are recognised and valued by the staff, who are exceptionally well informed of children's starting points and capabilities derived from discussion with parents and sensitive ongoing observations. There is a strong and very positive partnership with parents. Effective systems for the evaluation of the nursery ensure that all staff understand the strengths and recognise the areas of improvement within the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continue to develop links with other providers to aid transition and to ensure progression and continuity of learning and care.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children benefit greatly from the continually evolving early years provision. Staff are guided by a highly experienced and skilled management team who inspire,

encourage and value their contributions. The staff are highly qualified and motivated and have a very clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, effectively implementing routines that give children a vast range of opportunities and new experiences. Recruitment procedures promote children's welfare because all staff undergo all necessary checks before working with children. Detailed induction and appraisals ensure that training needs are identified. The staff's professional development is strongly encouraged and they need very little encouragement to continue their training and personal development. The participation of senior staff in local initiatives, training and steering groups ensures that the nursery maintains highly productive links and helps to influence future early years programmes.

All policies and procedures for the safe management of the provision are in place and are constantly reviewed. Highly detailed risk assessments are drawn up as well as an outdoor risk assessment which is completed independently by the local authority and ensures that all risks are identified and appropriate action is taken to prevent injury to children and users of the setting. Although the manager and staff team have yet to complete a formal evaluation of the setting, there is no sense of complacency as they are constantly seeking to make the provision the best it can be, demonstrating their total commitment to the continuous improvement of the setting. Links with other agencies, such as the local authority and family support workers, are used successfully to provide a high level of support for children and their families. The management team are currently working towards establishing a standardised system for liaising with other settings where children also attend to assist in the transition and to provide consistency in their care, learning and development. Staff are deployed in a highly effective way, enabling them to focus completely on the children. Consequently, the children are purposefully engaged in their play and are very happy and settled.

Staff maintain very good links with parents. The information parents receive before their child starts to outline the aims of the setting and familiarise them with nursery routines is very good. An excellent daily diary system and learning journeys ensure that staff and parents are kept fully informed about day-to-day and significant events in the children's lives. Successful settling-in periods or home visits mean that children settle quickly and ensure they are very happy and secure in their environment. Every opportunity to involve parents in the setting is taken. Social events are organised and outings and activities within the centre encourage them to take an active role in the setting. Parents' views are sought and their opinions are valued. For example, in response to parental evaluation, changes to the menus and the repositioning of coat pegs have been implemented.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are eager to attend and relish their time in the safe setting which puts them first. They are animated and enthusiastic as they make choices about their activities. Children play happily with each other and staff, learning to take turns and respond to others as they participate in a rich range of activities. They are developing excellent levels of confidence and self-esteem, which they use effectively to voice their choices, feelings and ideas. Early communication skills are extremely

well supported through high quality adult–child interaction. Staff successfully achieve a balance between supervised activities and allowing children the freedom to create from their imagination and to take the leading role in their play. Staff consistently praise and encourage children and have high, realistic expectations of them all, resulting in behaviour which is very good. A highly effective key worker system is operated and ensures all staff have an excellent awareness of the children's needs. The staff's knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage is extremely good and totally effective in helping children to make very good progress towards the early learning goals.

Outdoor play for the children is a major contribution to their overall development and contributes excellently to children's learning, independence and confidence. Children develop an insatiable level of curiosity as they are enabled to explore and investigate their surroundings. The outdoor area is used effectively as an extension to the indoor learning environment where even the youngest of children are given the freedom to experiment and refine their movements by climbing, digging in sand, crawling through the willow tunnel and using their creative imaginations with musical instruments and the playhouse. All children show real excitement towards playing outdoors. They dress appropriately for outdoors with puddle suits or fleeces and confidently find wellington boots to put on. As staff truly value and recognise the potential of outdoor play, this is transferred to the children and their enthusiasm is evident. This regular and extremely successful access to the outdoor environment boosts children's physical and emotional well-being as well as keeping them healthy.

Children have very good opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through varied planned and spontaneous activities. Active, inquisitive and independent learners, they are developing skills to support their future economic well-being. Children's creativity is promoted very well by staff who acknowledge that it is the process not the end product that is important. Staff's approach to planning is based on careful and sensitive listening, observations and reflection, thus enabling them to give the utmost priority to child-initiated, spontaneous play. The reflective planning is effectively evaluated by staff who ensure that children are offered a range of excellent experiences in all areas of learning.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Outstanding
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Outstanding
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Outstanding

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Outstanding
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Good
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Good
How well are children safeguarded?	Outstanding

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Outstanding
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Outstanding
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Outstanding
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Outstanding

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website:
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.