

Haltwhistle Little Star

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY278887
Inspection date 07/08/2009
Inspector Diane Roberts

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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 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

Haltwhistle Little Star Pre-School is run by a management committee. It opened in 2004 and mainly operates from a single story purpose-built nursery. It occasionally provides crèche facilities from a neighbouring Children's Centre building. Within the nursery there are two playrooms and a sleep room available for children with access to enclosed outdoor play areas. The setting is situated on Haltwhistle Community Campus in the centre of Haltwhistle, Northumberland. It is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year.

The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery at any one time and a maximum of 16 may attend the crèche. There are currently 96 children on roll, many in part-time places. Within the main building the setting also provides a breakfast club, wrap-around care for the local school and an after-school club.

There are 12 members of staff, including two managers, 10 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least National Vocational Qualification level 2. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-old children and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The staff's comprehensive knowledge of each child's individual needs and their firm commitment to safeguarding means children are making good progress in their learning and development. Strong partnerships with parents and other agencies further ensure an inclusive provision where all aspects of children's welfare and development are promoted successfully within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework. Regular self-evaluation and a commitment to personal development help to identify ongoing improvements to promote good outcomes for children. This demonstrates a good capacity for continuous improvement by the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- further develop a systematic and routine approach to using observations to help decide where children are in their learning and development and to plan what to do.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The management committee and the managers of the setting work closely to offer secure and effective leadership and management. This means that staff are well

supported and have a good knowledge of the well-written policies and procedures to ensure children's care, learning and development are promoted at all times. Clear training and development plans are in place for all staff and everyone has worked hard to address recommendations made at the last inspection.

Improvements to promote equality and inclusion have had a beneficial impact for all children. The staffs' thorough knowledge of Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and guidance, and their dedication to working closely with the relevant agencies means that children's safety and welfare are given the highest priority. Good systems are in place through regular risk assessments of all aspects of the provision to ensure further children's safety. Resources are effectively and efficiently deployed and actions are promptly taken to manage or eliminate risks.

A particular strength of the setting is the excellent partnerships built with parents, carers and other agencies. These relationships ensure the specific needs of each child are carefully identified and steps taken to access any further support needed. Inclusive practice is well promoted so that all children have their welfare needs met and achieve as well as they can regardless of background. Parents and carers are provided with good quality information about the early years provision and are well informed about their children's achievements and progress. Parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child, particularly when the child first starts to attend. Parents make highly positive comments about the staff always being 'very welcoming' and about the varied activities their children enjoy. They say they feel staff are very supportive and offer 'lots of love and encouragement' to their children within a 'very nurturing environment'.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Within this welcoming setting, all children appear happy and industrious as they play contentedly amongst their friends. A wide range of resources, toys and equipment are freely accessible and children are beginning to make informed choices about their own learning. They are encouraged to develop habits and behaviour appropriate to good learners as they join in, make friends and respect each other. Children are encouraged to behave in ways that are safe for themselves and others and develop an understanding of dangers. Warm responsive care by staff helps children feel secure and valued and become more caring towards others. Throughout each day they enjoy many opportunities for creativity and are able to express their imagination through painting, collage or role play. Attractive displays with appropriate text encourage children's literacy skills. Through skilful questioning by staff and opportunities to create pictures depicting the weather children are developing knowledge and understanding of the world. For instance, children talk excitedly about making pictures using ice cubes, expertly recalling what happens to ice cubes as they melt.

Children make very good progress towards the early learning goals in relation to their starting points, capabilities and interests. Key persons maintain records of children's achievements and observations are made of children at play. This information is used to identify next steps in learning for individual children and generally forms the basis of weekly planning but as yet this is not consistent throughout the setting. Children are encouraged to be creative and think critically.

For example, they are able to quickly work out how to remove a cover from the chalk easel so they can spontaneously create with the readily available chalks. Opportunities for role play are both planned and spontaneous. A designated role play area contains pads of paper and pencils, money-drawers and calculators to encourage children's communication, literacy and economic well-being as they act out everyday situations. Adults readily enter into the spirit of play by asking what they can order to eat in the café. Children create dishes and write out bills for their customers. Alongside this activity children imaginatively become hairdressers pretending to style one another's hair. They behave very well, happily taking turns at hair styling without prompt. They expertly make hair washing actions and skilfully screw tops back on empty shampoo bottles thereby demonstrating their keen physical skills.

Children have opportunities to be active and develop an understanding of the benefits of physical activity both indoors and outside. Adults are vigilant when children are learning new skills, such as riding a bike. They conscientiously make sure children's heads and skin are protected whilst in the sun. Children are encouraged in taking responsibility, for instance, by tidying away their own dishes and cutlery after eating. Healthy snacks include bread sticks, apples, strawberries and milk. Staff are very good role models as they conscientiously follow good hygiene practices, such as hand washing after nose-blowing or before eating and current health information is readily available for parents. This further demonstrates staff's firm commitment to ensuring children's health.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is 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? | 2 |
| How well does the provision promote inclusive practice? | 2 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement. | 2 |

Leadership and management

| | |
|---|---|
| How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed? | 2 |
| How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement? | 2 |
| How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others? | 2 |
| How well are children safeguarded? | 2 |

Quality and standards

| | |
|---|---|
| How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop? | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted? | 2 |
| How well are children helped to stay safe? | 2 |
| How well are children helped to be healthy? | 2 |
| How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve? | 2 |
| How well are children helped to make a positive contribution? | 2 |
| How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being? | 2 |

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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