

# Durham University Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY257491  
**Inspection date** 11/08/2009  
**Inspector** Ann Coggin

**Setting address** Haworth Building, Pelaw Leases Lane, Durham, County Durham, DH1 1TA  
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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).

## Description of the setting

Durham University Day Nursery is owned and managed by Durham University and was registered in March 2003. It is located in an urban residential area near Durham City Centre, close to the university's School of Education, the College of St Hild and St Bede. The nursery operates from three main activity rooms within a single-storey building. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery is open to all, but university staff and students are given preference in the nursery's admissions process as it is a designated workplace nursery for university staff. Short-term parking is available for drop off and collection of children at the front of the nursery in designated bays. There is level access for bringing and collecting children and wheelchair access. The nursery is open from 08.00 to 18.00, Monday to Friday, throughout the year. It closes for short periods when the university is closed over Christmas, Easter and bank holidays.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 90 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 117 children aged from eight months to under five years on roll. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 24 permanent members of staff, 22 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least National Vocational Qualification level 2. Two members of staff have completed the Foundation Degree in Education and Care. There are also ancillary staff employed. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

## Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. All children make very good progress in their learning and development due to their positive interaction with staff in all areas of the nursery, the resources and activities available and their environment. Effective practice, such as careful attention to dietary needs and well organised handovers when children move rooms, ensure children's welfare needs are met. Inclusive practice is evident, with staff providing activities and resources that are accessible to all. Evidence is available of recent improvements to the provision and effective plans for the future demonstrate a capacity to maintain continuous improvement.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- obtain written parental permission to the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment
- develop the complaints log to ensure confidentiality is respected.

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

The strong management team have ensured that most records, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are in place. However, written parental permission to the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment has not been obtained. The nursery is very well-organised, with consistency between the various rooms aiding staff when they are in other areas. Systems, such as the entry intercom, ensure that levels of supervision for children remain high at all times. Within each room staff make good use of their time and the resources available. Detailed risk assessments throughout help minimize or eliminate identified hazards and daily checks ensure necessary measures are in place. The nursery's self-evaluation is obviously ongoing and thorough and demonstrates involvement from staff and parents and accurately portrays the setting's many strengths and areas they are working to improve. A complaints log has been introduced; however, entries do not respect confidentiality.

Thorough recruitment, vetting and induction procedures help to protect children. Children are safeguarded because staff are confident about signs and symptoms that would cause them concern and, generally, about what action to take. Children benefit from having experienced and qualified staff who work well as a team and are effectively deployed. Staff are committed to further their professional development through training and attending courses and workshops. These include the EYFS training, behaviour management, 'inspiring creative thinkers' and 'outdoors in all weathers'. Staff use the knowledge gained to provide stimulating activities for children, such as the development of the black and white area in the baby room. Staff are kind and patient. They are energetic in their work with the children, which assists in giving children a sense of security during their time at nursery.

Parents are made to feel comfortable in the nursery. When children first attend, key staff take care to obtain full details of the children's routines from the parents. Parental feedback is welcomed, both verbally and through questionnaires, and has resulted in some changes to practice. Parents access detailed information about the setting, particularly when children first attend, with several visits encouraged. They obtain information about their child's progress through daily discussion with key staff, daily individual diaries and at formal meetings with key persons each term to discuss their child's development. Parents are encouraged to add comments to assessments and about significant experiences or progress at home. Very good relationships exist with parents and external agencies to ensure children get the necessary support to meet their individual needs. Parents express their satisfaction with the service provided and comment on staff being friendly, approachable and caring.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Children access a child-centred learning environment which supports their transition to independence extremely well. Each room contains a wide selection of

age-appropriate resources, equipment and materials, so they explore and follow their individual interests, thus learning at their own pace. They benefit from excellent positive interaction with staff, who obviously care about the children's welfare as well as providing appropriate support so that learning is well promoted. Activities are based on previously identified interests and capabilities, due to careful observation by staff and discussion with the children and their parents. High quality planning ensures that each child receives an enjoyable and challenging experience across all areas of learning, with staff concentrating on objectives that are relevant to each child's next steps. In baby rooms many activities take place on the floor or low tables, which encourages children to explore what is available, practising their emerging physical skills at the same time. Babies feed themselves while older children have self-serve during meal times and are encouraged to do this and try a bit of everything. Overall, children's behaviour is very good, because they are well occupied in engaging activities and staff are confident about handling minor incidents that occur. Children play together, sharing resources and taking turns when necessary, as staff's emphasis on positive reinforcement and always giving an explanation helps them develop an understanding of what is expected.

All children are very happy, confident and self-assured as they move freely from the inside to outdoors throughout the day to access many additional learning opportunities. Sand, water and soil are particular favourites. Several children gather around together, using spoons, scoops, buckets and watering cans to make sandcastles, water the plants and talk about the different textures. Staff remain close at hand to supervise and offer support and guidance and join in activities when asked. Children thoroughly enjoy physical exercise as they ride bikes, climb and play bat and ball. Babies have opportunities to crawl, pull themselves up and use sit and ride toys. Laughter and giggles can be heard as they play hide and seek with staff, using the collapsible tunnel. Older children roll large balls down the ramp and run eagerly to catch them. Children have many opportunities to count and make marks. They use pens, magnetic letters and chalk boards to write their names. Numbers begin to have meaning as the environment has lots of visual numerals for children to recognise and understand what individual digits are. They have good access to information and technology resources, as they use programmable toys and confidently use the computer to play simple games. They learn about recycling and nature through caring for giant snails, growing and caring for their plants and visits to the river where they feed the ducks. Staff use genuine praise and encouragement to promote children's self-esteem and confidence and children beam with pride as they are praised for their achievements.

Promoting children's welfare is a priority for the nursery. Safety is paramount with staff ensuring children only access equipment and resources which are safe, age-appropriate and in good condition. Regular fire drills and reminders of the rules within the setting help the children develop an understanding of keeping themselves safe. Children adopt healthy lifestyles through excellent access to outdoor play and the provision of a varied diet. From a young age children are encouraged to feed themselves and have independent access to drinks, which keeps them well hydrated, with the older children beginning to serve their own meals. Children's health is protected by their robust personal hygiene, with low-

level sinks, steps and paper towels preventing the spread of infection and ensuring good habits. Regular cleaning, particularly of objects mouthed by babies and of individual bedding, helps to protect them from the risk of cross infection.

## 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

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	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

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	1
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	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?	1
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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