

The School House Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 11/01/2010
Inspector Ferroza Saiyed

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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.

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Description of the setting

The School House Nursery was registered to the current provider, a limited company, in 2003. It operates from both ground and first floor rooms, in a detached property in the Billinge area of Blackburn. There is level access to the building. There is an enclosed area available for outside play.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 55 children at any one time. There are currently 42 children on roll in the early years age group. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm, for 51 weeks a year. The nursery supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs eight childcare staff, of which, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is also a cook and part-time cleaner in employment. The nursery receives support from the local authority early years team and is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The nursery provides a relaxed and friendly environment, where all children have fun through a suitable variety of play activities provided. Staff have a developing knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and provide a suitable balance of adult led and child initiated activities, to support their learning and development. Staff promote all aspects of the children's welfare, keeping them safe and secure. The nursery demonstrates a commitment to ensuring children's individual needs are met, meaning all children are valued and respected. Appropriate systems are in place for self-evaluation, which demonstrates the setting's commitment to ongoing improvement and clearly identifies areas for further improvements. Enthusiasm from the staff team in embracing changes, means improved outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- encourage all parents and carers to review their children's progress, so they can contribute to their child's learning and development record
- continue to develop planning and assessment systems, in order to match the observations of children to the expectations of the early learning goals. To ensure all area of learning are covered and make effective use of observation, to identify the children's next step
- provide challenging opportunities in the outdoor area, such as, large scale climbing apparatus for the older children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery offers a flexible service, in which children are suitably cared for in small groups, by teams of caring, committed staff. The policies and procedures are reviewed and updated. All required documentation is in place for the safe and sound management of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Risk assessments are in place and a daily check is carried out on all areas to be accessed by the children, including risk assessments for each type of outings. Written consents from parents, as well as being constantly vigilant at all times, safeguards children. Clear systems are in place for the vetting of staff, which ensures children's safety. Staff have understanding of the requirements for reporting any child protection concerns and safeguarding policies are appropriately implemented.

The nursery is committed to the ongoing improvement of the provision and has begun a self-evaluation process, which includes the input of all staff. This successfully enables staff to take ownership of the process and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Staff have worked hard to address the actions raised at the previous inspection and the manager demonstrates a genuine commitment towards developing the setting. They have worked closely with their early years adviser and have implemented action plans to suitably identify and address areas for development. This has resulted in improved procedures for planning activities and all policies have been updated in line with the legal requirements. This helps to promote outcomes for children. Staff set up a suitable range of activities, which children confidently choose from. These include resources that reflect positive images of diversity, which encourage children to respect each other's similarities and differences.

Children benefit from the staff's commitment to attending training courses, in order to enhance the opportunities and experiences offered to children. Parents are asked for information about their child at the beginning of the partnership, however, the system is not fully robust and parents are not actively involved in their child's learning. This means they cannot contribute to their child's learning and development. They receive information about the setting in various ways, such as, verbal and written feedback, communication dairies and regular newsletters. Parents speak highly of the care and education their children receive, in a secure environment, as well as the dedicated service provided by the staff team.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children enjoy their time in the setting and show interest in the appropriately challenging activities. They relate well to the staff who give them a lot of one-to-one attention. Staff have satisfactory knowledge of the EYFS and recognise the importance of play. They are developing a planning system to complete observations, to promote next steps in children's progression towards the early learning goals. However, planning and assessment are currently in their infancy. Children have individual files in place, which include colourful photographs and

observation sheets. Staff use discussion with parents to identify starting points, however, they have yet to fully involve parents as part of the observation and assessment process. The recording system for the children's learning journey is to be further developed, to track their progress more effectively.

Children initiate their own learning competently, as they make choices from the wide range of resources and activities. The learning environment is stimulating, with displays of children's work reflecting the range of opportunities within the setting. Children thoroughly enjoy creative experiences and use their imaginations well through role play, as they pretend to make food for their peers. Children are developing an interest in books. They happily sit in the book corner, looking at books with staff. Children enjoy story time and respond appropriately, as they listen attentively to stories and predict what will happen next. Children confidently practise their writing skills, as they access a range of tools to make marks, using paper, brushes, pens, and pencils to write their own name and draw.

Babies and toddlers enjoy sensory experiences, such as, playing with treasure baskets, coloured bottles and textured materials. They have great fun, as they enjoy exploring paint to make hand prints. Staff are proactive in their interactions with children, but also skilfully step back when they recognise that children need space for self-discovery and contemplation. For example, when tasting and feeling the textures of different fruits. Staff repeat words back to the children to enhance their vocabulary. Toddlers enjoy vocalising, as the staff initiates conversation and reinforces their attempt to speak.

Children's relish the outdoor play, they are free to play outside in all weathers. They enjoy playing and making footprints in the snow, throwing snow ball at each other and exploring how snow melts when warm water is poured. Children show a good sense of space and bodily awareness, they know the need to wear their coats, because 'it is cold outside', as one child informed the inspector. Another stated that they were tired after running. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to access large apparatus to develop their large motor skills. They practise their fine motor skills, as they readily use scissors and small tools with confidence and skill, to increase their hand-eye coordination.

Children learn about keeping safe through practising the emergency evacuation procedures. They learn about etiquette and social manners, as they sit at meal times and serve themselves from a balanced diet of freshly prepared meals. Regular praise and encouragement helps to promote children's self-esteem and promotes positive behaviour. Children with English as an additional language are well integrated into the setting and staff demonstrate a positive attitude towards equal opportunities. There is a good range of resources, pictures and books which reflect positive images of diversity, which helps children learn to respect others. Children are developing many skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being. For example, they are eager to use programmable toys and become increasingly confident in using interactive resources.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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