

Cuddly Koalas Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Valerie Block

Setting address	Broughton Moor Methodist Chapel Rooms, Seaton Road, Broughton Moor, Maryport, Cumbria, CA15 8ST
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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*.

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Description of the setting

Cuddly Koalas Pre-School was opened in 1997, originally in different premises. The setting operates from the chapel rooms within the Methodist chapel at Broughton Moor, approximately three miles from Maryport, Cumbria. The children use the schoolroom and main chapel as play areas. There is a secure outdoor play area available and children play there under close supervision. The setting is open from 9.00am to 3.00pm in term times.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 32 children aged from two to under five years on roll, some in part-time places. The setting serves children from the immediate and extended rural areas.

There are four members of staff, all of whom hold early years qualifications. The manager has a foundation degree in Early Years Studies. The setting provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds.

The setting is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are well cared for and progressing well as staff have a good understanding of individual children's needs and interests as well as a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Self-evaluation is, in the main, very robust and all relevant parties are asked to contribute to this process to ensure effectiveness. Managers and staff are eager and enthusiastic to increase their skills and develop the provision for the benefit of the children and their families. Improvements have been made following this process that have increased quality for children. Children benefit from effective partnerships with parents and the other providers of the EYFS.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the organisation of resources and play opportunities, in particular to provide more accessible water play indoors
- review the risk assessment to ensure that areas of risk, such as storage in the kitchen and the uncovered grate in the outdoor area, are addressed.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded as there is a clear safeguarding policy that is evaluated regularly for effectiveness. This is understood by staff and shared with parents for their information. Staff are suitably vetted and cleared to work with children and are experienced and qualified in childcare and education.

The capacity for driving improvement through the evaluation of the quality of the provision in liaison with children, parents and others is good and, for the most part, improvement areas have been well identified and planned for. The manager is a highly motivated, qualified and experienced practitioner who has a clear vision and detailed plans for future improvement of the setting to improve the outcomes for children. Staff's training needs are known and planned for effectively. Staff are eager and enthusiastic, well motivated and clear about their job roles and responsibilities and work well as a team. The group have entered into quality assurance programmes that have helped the provision evaluate and make changes to improve performance for the benefit of the children. Staff take and act on advice received from local authority advisors to assess performance and improve quality for the children.

Staff ensure children's continuing good health by using robust procedures. For example, they wear gloves and aprons whilst nappy changing and when dealing with bodily fluids. They also undertake regular full risk assessments which help to identify and minimise potential hazards. There are a couple of risk factors that have not been accounted for. These include the safety of children when in the kitchen area where there are some accessible chemicals and there is an open deep grate outside where children could hurt themselves. Staff have improved the arrangements for ensuring children are warm at the premises and are working towards raising funds to further improve the heating throughout the building following a recommendation at a previous inspection so showing they make improvements as recommended for children's benefit.

Children's health is promoted as staff encourage a positive attitude to physical exercise and healthy eating is promoted. Parents are actively encouraged to provide healthy lunchboxes for children and the staff provide a help sheet of suggestions for parents when children first stay for lunch.

The deployment of resources is effective as staff use library resources to augment available books and toys. The setting involves children in the recycling of materials, so teaching them to become good citizens, respecting the natural world. The premises are accessible to all families and abilities and there is a good range of toys and resources to meet the needs of children. Resources are, in the main, accessible to all children to enable them to play freely and make independent choices. However, water play is restricted to outdoor use only, so reducing their ability to make choices in their play and learning.

Staff value and respect children's individuality and the family context for each child. The manager has established an excellent audit for equality and diversity

and a plan to promote accessibility to the group to ensure she and her team are well aware of issues relevant to their group and so are very proactive about ensuring a welcoming, inclusive environment for all. Positive images, resources and activities support children's understanding of difference and diversity in the world around them.

The partnerships with parents and carers as well as other providers of the EYFS are outstanding. This contributes to all children's well-being and continuity of care and education. The group have instigated a 'Keypie' (Key Person Information Exchange) system to share information about children that attend various early years settings. Parents' views about their child's needs and interests are actively sought before their child starts and on a regular basis throughout their time at the group. Once a year parents complete a questionnaire to elicit their views on the quality of the provision and any issues arising are discussed at a management meeting and used in the setting's self-evaluation process. A few years ago staff changed practice following receipt of parents' suggestions and comments and extended the provision to provide care for children at lunchtime and in the afternoons. Parents are also invited to share their views at 'stay and chat' sessions where they are able to discuss with staff their individual child's progress and they are encouraged to discuss the working of the group. Parents are also invited to become part of the management committee and to take a more active part in the life of the group. When children are about to move on to school, the staff invite the teachers to visit children at the group and look at their learning story file, aiding transition and settling in at school.

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

Children are well settled and are making good progress as staff work with parents and other providers of the EYFS to assess their learning needs well and use this information to plan activities that are relevant and interesting to the particular children who are attending the setting. Staff have a good understanding of the EYFS and planning covers all areas of learning well. Planning is led by children's learning and interests and staff ensure a mix of adult-led and child-led learning, including mainly accessible play equipment as well as planned and spontaneous events that challenge and excite children, helping them become active, interested learners. Children become confident as adults praise their efforts and value their work and children show they feel safe as they form affectionate relationships with the staff and one another. Staff skilfully extend children's learning by challenging them and using open-ended questioning. This encourages children to think and promotes language and communication skills.

Children are encouraged to take a koala bear toy on their holidays and take pictures of her to share with the other children when they return. Parents keep a holiday diary so that staff can chat with children about what they have been doing. This enables staff to understand children's individuality and experiences so that children feel valued and included in the setting. Parents are closely involved in their children's learning and are invited to complete the first pages in their child's individual learning story to give information about the children's starting points.

Staff talk to parents about how they can help extend learning at home. Partners in the EYFS exchange information that is helpful to the group's planning for each child, ensuring coherence and continuity for children.

Children enjoy being creative and learning about nature as they mix paints to make orange, a colour of autumn, which they can see outside, and children are intrigued to see colours changing as they add new colours. Staff are on hand to facilitate, ask and answer questions and extend vocabulary. Children then enjoy painting an orange painting using their own mixed colour and are allowed space and time to enjoy the activity. They begin to recognise their name on their pegs, table mats and individual drawers, beginning to recognise the letters in their name. At registration time they are encouraged to try writing their name on a blackboard. Children have enjoyed an exciting activity where they built a bamboo structure using shapes and then creatively adorned it with paintings, ribbons and writing. They learned about creativity, construction and problem solving as well as working cooperatively. They eagerly put on their wellington boots and coats to enjoy outdoor play on a cold day and run around happily using hoola hoops and manoeuvring prams and ride-on cars, enjoying fresh air and physical play.

Children feel safe in the setting and are beginning to understand about issues relating to safety. Staff allow children space to explore the outside area where there is a small hill that the children enjoy climbing and walking down. Staff talk to them about the risks but give them the opportunity to develop physical skills. They remind children about using tissues to wipe their nose and disposing of the tissue in the right bin to teach them about keeping healthy. Children behave very well, happily helping one another to tidy up. Children are involved in activities about different cultures and races, so learning to understand and value diversity. They learn to understand about using computers and so are developing skills for the future.

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?	2
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?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

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