

The Old Vicarage

Inspection report for early years provision

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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 Old Vicarage was registered in 2009 and is privately owned by a limited company. It is registered to provide full day care for 62 children and is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It operates from a two-storey converted period detached building in the village of Redlam in Blackburn. Children are grouped in three playrooms according to their age and needs and there is a secure outdoor play area.

The setting opens five days a week from 7.45am to 5.45pm all year. Children attend from a large catchment area. There are currently 70 children on roll, with 17 in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and disabilities and receive support from the local authority complex needs team.

There are 13 members of staff who work with the children, all of whom have appropriate childcare qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework. The learning environment offers continuous provision, covering all areas of learning. Staff work hard in recognising and meeting children's individuality. Children are very settled, confident and making good progress towards the early learning goals. An inclusive environment is promoted and supports children with special educational needs and disabilities very well. Children's safety and welfare is generally promoted very well. Relationships with parents are established and the nursery endeavours to form relationships with other professionals involved with the children. Effective systems of self-evaluation help to identify the setting's strengths and areas for improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to establish links with other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage
- continue to develop partnerships with parents further by effectively sharing children's learning journals with them
- make sure that all members of staff fully understand the safeguarding policy and procedures, particularly with regard to if an allegation is made about a member of staff

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

In the main, managers and staff have a clear understanding regarding their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children and attend training regularly. Risk assessments promote children's safety and they are in place for all areas of the setting and are reviewed regularly. Effective safety measures keep children safe. For example, safety gates protect children from higher risk areas, such as the stairs, good security on the main entrance prevents unwelcome entry and children learn to negotiate the staircase by holding the low hand-rail and walking one by one. Children learn how to keep themselves safe in an emergency situation through regular participation in practice evacuations. Robust procedures for vetting staff are in place and further protect children. All members of staff have childcare qualifications and they are actively supported to strive for further qualifications. Staff are deployed effectively and closely supervise children at all times.

The management team demonstrates a good capacity for evaluating their practice and maintaining continuous improvement. Good progress has recently been made by introducing free-flow play, child-initiated activities and developing the enhancement resources. This ensures activities are child-led and children are proactive in making decisions about their play. Staff are involved in the evaluation process during team and full staff meetings, ensuring that their views are considered. Together, staff have identified several areas for future improvement, for example, making the outdoor play area part of the continuous play provision, provide additional security to the external fences and gates and identify free time for staff to complete children's learning journals. Additionally, planned alterations to one of the children's toilets making it barrier free will provide children with mobility difficulties greater independence.

Parents are warmly welcomed into the setting and find staff friendly and approachable. New parents are provided with an informative brochure and made aware of the setting's written policies and procedures and where they may access them. Noticeboards on both levels of the nursery also keep them well informed. There are clear procedures for a two-way flow of information, which ensures parents and staff are kept well informed about the children. For example, new parents complete comprehensive 'getting to know me' forms, which provide key workers with information about a child's starting points. Daily diary sheets inform parents of younger children about diet, toileting and activity details. Daily conversations also keep parents up-to-date about their child. Parents have access to observation forms which they can record any significant achievements in their child's life, such as first words, number recognition or other significant development. Any completed records would be included in a child's learning journal. Parents report feeling very well informed about their child's care needs and in general what they have done during the day. However, there are no effective procedures for sharing information about children's learning and the progress they make towards the early learning goals. New parents are made aware about children's individual learning journals and where they are kept but most parents do not access their child's file.

The nursery promotes equality of opportunity and has built very good links with other professionals involved with children with special education and disability needs. They are supported well within the setting by portage workers, speech therapists, educational psychologists and complex needs team. Access to specialist equipment and adaptation of some play activities ensures all children are included and are well supported in their development. The setting has not yet established links with other settings who also deliver the EYFS where children attend and this impacts on the continuity of care and learning. The organisation of the premises, availability of resources and deployment of staff, effectively supports children's learning and development whilst promoting their welfare and well-being.

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

Staff have a good understanding of the EYFS and as a consequence children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Planning incorporates child-initiated activities and adult-led activities are often planned to mirror individual children's interests and development. Children's learning journals include evaluative written observations linked to the six areas of learning, examples of their work and some photographs. Their next steps in learning are clearly assessed. Staff provide children with good support and encouragement and consequently they are very motivated to learn. The environment is set out in areas of continuous provision, allowing children to learn to make decisions, make choices and follow their particular interests. They have access to a good range of challenging play resources and activities and they are busily occupied and well engaged.

Staff interact very well with the children. They spend time listening, talking and playing with the children. In particular, they are very gentle and calm with the babies, allowing them to investigate their surroundings and involving them in a range of creative activities. Staff encourage children to develop good self-help skills, such as going to the toilet, washing their hands and teeth and cleaning their noses; all of which contribute to children being healthy.

Staff encourage children to have an interest in reading and books. Very young children enjoy looking at the pictures in board books and further develop their language skills as they hear familiar words and copy the sounds the practitioner makes. Older children sit spellbound as they listen to the story of 'The Gruffalo', predicting what happens next in the story. Children know print carries meaning as letters and words are displayed around the rooms to label storage and their artwork. Children have good vocabulary skills and are confident to speak, for example, they ask the inspector, 'What are you doing in our room?' and 'Why are you washing your hands in our bathroom?' Children freely access a range of media in mark-making areas and they have drawn self-portrait pictures, where they have explored feelings, such as what makes them happy, sad and scared. Children learn about problem solving, reasoning and numeracy in everyday routines. They sing songs and look at books reflecting number. They count how many children are present and how many musical instruments they will need for one each. They begin to learn about simple science as they pour and fill different size jugs in the

water play. Children learn about others as they celebrate the festival of Diwali. They make Diwali lights by moulding clay to hold tea-lights. Children have access to technology, for example, young children enjoy pressing buttons to operate sound and musical toys, older children use computers and more capable children are competent at dragging and dropping objects using the mouse. Children have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise in the outdoor area; they greatly enjoy using rakes to gather fallen leaves, dragging them to make a large mound. They develop large physical skills through music and movement activities, riding bikes, climbing on frames and kicking balls.

Children feel safe in the nursery and staff reinforce safety rules through repetitive discussion. They are able to explain that when going downstairs they have to hold the low hand-rail and walk one by one. Positive steps are taken to promote children's good health and well-being. They have access to freshly prepared meals and snacks and there are sound systems in place to ensure their dietary requirements are met, including babies who are being weaned. Menus reflect a very good balance of healthy meals with daily portions of fruit and vegetables. Children are able to help themselves to water throughout the day. Their health is further protected with effective policies and procedures to prevent the spread of illness.

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	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Met