

Bill Quay Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date 20/10/2009
Inspector Kathleen Snowdon

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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

Bill Quay Pre-School originally registered in 1990. It was re-registered as a limited company with charitable status in 2009 and is based in a classroom in Bill Quay Primary School in Gateshead. The group has access to the school hall and has a fully enclosed outdoor play area. It is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The group is open five days a week, Monday to Friday, in term time only. Pre-school sessions run from 9 to 11.30am and 12.30 to 3pm. A maximum of 21 children aged from three to four years may attend and currently there are 33 children on roll. Some children attend both morning and afternoon sessions and stay for lunch. There is also a breakfast club, which runs from 7.50 until 8.50 am. This accommodates a maximum of 26 children, aged from three to 11 years. Children from the pre-school group use this facility as well as pupils who attend the host school.

Five staff work directly with the children and all hold relevant level three qualifications. The setting receives support from advisors from the local authority and the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The group keeps goldfish.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

An exceptional key person system, very good safeguarding measures and outstanding partnership working means that children's individual needs are met in full. This secure and inclusive environment promotes the children's welfare and underpins the excellent progress they make in their learning and development. Staff have acted on a recommendation made at the inspection before re-registration. They make highly perceptive and reflective assessments of their practice and as a result the scope for continuous improvement is excellent.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- continue professional development, for example, by further raising skills and qualification levels to beyond level three.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Excellent priority is attached to safeguarding supported by staff's very good awareness of child protection issues. Rigorous recruitment procedures determine the suitability of adults working directly with the children and staffing ratios are

exceeded. When deployed in different areas, staff use intercoms to communicate with one another so children are never unattended even for short intervals. As a result children feel safe and very well protected. All staff are involved in conducting thorough risk assessments to reduce the likelihood of accidents occurring indoors and out.

Documentation is impeccable. All essential records and written policies are in place. They are extremely well organised, stored securely on site and amended as soon as changes occur to keep information up to date and accurate. Staff sign a confidentiality policy to protect the privacy of the children who attend and they ensure that the registration and public liability insurance certificates are prominently displayed to reassure parents. As well as this, parents are given contact details for Ofsted, should they wish to express their views or discuss concerns.

Partnership with parents is exceptional. Parents receive very good quality written information before their child starts the group, including an 'All About Me' booklet, which enables them to pass on important basic information about their child. Parents, children and extended families go on annual outings with staff and they are all prolific fund raisers. Daily discussions, notebooks, newsletters and the dedicated notice board keep everyone fully informed of forthcoming events and the children's progress. Parents have highly positive views of the service. They say that the group is a 'very special place where children have a wonderful time' and describe staff as 'great teachers who make learning fun'.

Partnership working in the wider context is similarly impressive. The group liaises not only with other professionals, like advisors, teachers and speech therapists, but also with local farms as well as national charitable organisations and supermarket chains. These contacts have a direct and hugely beneficial impact on the quality of care and education that the children receive. The group seeks the views of parents and other partners about the quality of the service and asks how to improve. As well as this, staff reflect on their work and discuss practice issues during staff meetings. All staff hold a level three qualification but as yet none have exceeded this. However, they are committed to ongoing professional development and undertake relevant training. Recent courses include first aid, food hygiene and special educational needs.

Staff promote equality by encouraging boys and girls to use all available toys and by including every child in all activities. Excellent use is made of resources. Indoor and outdoor play areas are very well defined and children have easy access to a wide range of good quality equipment. As well as this, highly effective steps ensure that the environment and resources are sustainable. For instance, children and staff grow fruit and vegetables, collect rainwater and compost for the garden and recycle household rubbish by using it to make models with.

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

Children make excellent progress in their learning and development in relation to their starting points. Well balanced routines ensure that they have lots of scope to initiate play of their own accord. As well as this, the exceptional key person system informs, and is informed, by highly perceptive observations and assessments of individual children. This combination allows staff to plan exciting and challenging activities that cover all areas of learning and take account of children's interests.

For example, the children really enjoy language, exemplified in music sessions when they use sign, as well as oral, language to sing songs. This teaches children that there is more than one way of communicating. Their literacy development is further enhanced through very good use of phonics. For instance, during conversations with staff and their peers, children make confident use of actions to help them remember the letters that make up different sounds. They also love listening to a well told story and so begin to appreciate books and the written word.

The exceptional links the group has forged with external agencies present the children with highly interesting and hugely enjoyable opportunities. For example, they visit a local supermarket and bake bread under the supervision of their key person and the in-house baker. They visit the local farm to collect eggs for breakfast the next day and they immerse themselves in charitable events, such as 'Comic Relief'. These influences raise children's awareness of the locality in which they live as well as important social issues that affect the wider world.

Children's welfare is very well promoted. During their frequent trips out, the children wear wrist straps. These show staff's contact details and are intended to help children in the event of becoming separated from the main group. They practise fire drills, so learn how to stay safe in emergencies and they eat appetising fruit based snacks to encourage the development of healthy tastes and preferences. The children thoroughly enjoy playing in the very well equipped outdoor play area. This encourages them to be active and boosts their physical development.

Staff have very high expectations of children. They set clear and realistic boundaries that help the children to behave acceptably and to understand right from wrong. 'Helper of the Day' is awarded to the child who has been most helpful or kind, which encourages the development of positive personal qualities. As well as this, the children enjoy celebrating world festivals and they play with several resources that reflect positive images of disability, gender, culture and ethnicity. This teaches them to respect and value difference.

The solid and secure relationships that exist between children and the staff teach the children that they are valued and cherished. The children learn through having fun and enjoying themselves and through the skilful, sensitive teaching they receive. These excellent experiences help children to form strong, subsequent relationships and acquire the skills needed for future success.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
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

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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