

The Lonsdale Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY394734
Inspection date	19/11/2009
Inspector	Donna Suzanne Lancaster

Setting address	Lonsdale Nursery, 130 Grange Road, HARTLEPOOL, Cleveland, TS26 8JJ
Telephone number	01429278482
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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 Lonsdale Nursery is a privately owned provision. It opened in 1987 and was re-registered in 2009 with the present owners. It operates from a converted Victorian detached house close to the town centre of Hartlepool, near to local facilities and public transport. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am until 6pm, 51 weeks of the year except for bank holidays.

The setting is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 55 children may attend the nursery, of which no more than 18 may be under two years. Currently there are 87 children on roll. The children on roll live in the local and surrounding communities. They are accommodated in five rooms spread over two floors; there is no lift and there is a fully enclosed area for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 21 staff. All of these hold appropriate child care qualifications and work directly with the children; there is also a cook and domestic staff.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Staff provide a warm, homely and caring atmosphere, which leads to all children, their families and visitors feeling welcome. The learning environment is organised appropriately to meet children's needs and promotes their development in most areas of learning. However, the processes for observation, planning and assessments are not yet sufficiently developed or shared with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). There are strong and positive partnerships with parents and information is obtained regarding children's care needs. Systems are in place to enable the provision to identify most of the strengths and weaknesses in the service. However, some systems are not yet fully developed or clear in relation to the key persons and the management arrangements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- continue to develop the observations and assessment systems to identify individual children's learning priorities. Use the observations to plan relevant and motivating learning experiences and to identify and inform the next steps in children's learning; and match these observations to the expectations of the early learning goals
- review the staffing arrangements to ensure that there is suitable management cover at all times
- develop an effective key person system to ensure children's individual learning and development is supported and so that parents have a specific

- point of contact
- ensure that all children have opportunities to be able to flow and move between the indoors and outdoors where possible to give them choice and the freedom to explore
- ensure that practitioners share on a regular basis children's learning and development records with other providers who also deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage to children who attend the nursery.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager has been in post since the new providers took over the provision. Together they have reviewed and updated the settings records, policies and procedures which are required for the safe and efficient management of the EYFS. This ensures that the needs of all children are met. Most staff have attended safeguarding training and continuous in-house training is also provided to new staff and students to ensure they have an up-to-date understanding of safeguarding children issues. Staff are clear of the procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child in their care. In addition, effective vetting and recruitment procedures are in place to ensure children are well protected, and there are plans in place to introduce a new appraisal system to identify staff's training and development needs. Staff closely supervise children and maintain a safe environment in which children can play. For example, staff check the rooms, room temperatures and the resources each day before children arrive to ensure effective precautions are in place to minimise any risk to children. Management carry out annual detailed risk assessments for all parts of the nursery and for outings. This ensures children can play in a safe and secure environment.

The manager and staff have a positive attitude to caring for children with additional needs and they demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of how to promote inclusion for all children. For example, they operate an open door policy and share the equal opportunity policy with staff and parents. Since the manager has been in post she has been well supported by the area manager of the provision. However, her attendance on a regular daily basis at the nursery is not a long term plan. At the present time the manager works part time, which means that the provision operates with the deputy officer in charge for several hours throughout each day. This is not a suitable permanent arrangement for the management structure of the provision. Management have a positive attitude to continuous improvement and they are beginning to successfully use self-evaluation processes to help them identify any improvements to the setting. For example, they have recently introduced parent questionnaires and a new outings procedure, are ensuring that all staff hold appropriate paediatric first aid certificates and they plan to introduce a management monitoring file and annual parent evenings. Consequently, the capacity to maintain improvements is sound.

Children have independent access to a good range of resources, giving them the opportunity to make choices and decisions about what they do. However, opportunities for children to experience continuous provision both indoors and outdoors are not always freely available to all children. Resources are appropriate

to children's age and phase of development and supports children's learning and development. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of each child's background and needs. Parents receive good information about all aspects of the nursery detailed in parent packs, through regular newsletters and daily record sheets. A two-way flow of information enables parents to be kept informed of their child's day. Parents are very complimentary about the operation of the nursery, expressing a high regard for the staff, the welcoming and secure environment and dedicated service provided. Parents can access children's progress files at any time and some are involved in extending children's learning at home. Links with other providers who deliver the EYFS where nursery children also attend are not yet established, this does not ensure a consistent approach to children's care, learning and development is taken. However, information is passed on when children leave the setting to start school.

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

The provision provides a relaxed, welcoming and homely environment where children are happy and content. Space is organised so children can move around and play freely and staff provide appropriate support, as and when needed. Resources are stored at low levels which allows children to choose what they want to play with, and to easily and independently access them. Attractive displays of the children's artwork help to promote children's self-esteem and confidence. Children are well behaved and staff are good role models, giving children praise and encouragement for their achievements. Staff talk to children calmly which contributes to the children's sense of trust and develops a positive attitude to learning. Children are developing a sense of how to stay safe within the setting, for example, they know that they must hold on to the banister when coming down the stairs, 'so they don't fall' and that they must line up and walk outside to meet at the garden fence when the fire bell sounds. This further helps children to feel safe. Children are offered a variety of healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. This has been acknowledged by the authority, which has led to the provision gaining 'The Golden Apple' award. Children are becoming aware of simple hygiene routines from an early age as staff wash babies hands and faces at appropriate times and they encourage older children to wash their hands before eating and after toileting.

Most staff demonstrate a sound understanding of the EYFS learning and development requirements and children are making satisfactory progress in their learning and development. Staff know children well and have close relationship with parents, which ensures that their child's care needs are met. However, the system to ensure that each child has a named member of staff assigned to them to support their development is not yet fully developed. For example, the responsibility of maintaining children's records such as observations, assessments and future planning is mainly left to the room leaders. Consequently, children's learning priorities are not fully identified, planning is not linked to any particular area of learning or to children's next steps in their learning, and therefore staff cannot fully identify any gaps in children's learning.

Children have some good opportunities to begin to develop skills for their future development. For example, they use the computer well, using the mouse and keyboard appropriately. Staff also provide some opportunities for babies to explore technology. For example, babies show an interest in interactive toys, excitedly pressing the buttons to make sounds. They also enjoy experimenting with sound as they use the contents of the treasure baskets which contain various bottles with rice, pasta and coloured water in them, this enables them to make different noises with them. Children are provided with some resources, displays and activities to reflect equality and diversity. However, some lack purpose, for example, some labels are in a foreign language which is not known to staff and children. A suitable range of mark making resources are available, such as, paints, chalks and pencils, providing opportunities for children to develop their early writing skills. Every day routines and some activities allow children to begin to recognise numbers, shapes and colours. For example, they show their ages by using their fingers to count, they point to the square, circle and the heart on the computer screen and confidently name the colours of the crayons whilst they count how many they have. Children thoroughly enjoy the role play area where they make their own games up, such as being footballers. Early communication skills are beginning to develop, as staff sing familiar songs with babies and use baby signing to communicate words such as mummy and daddy. Babies smile and gurgle with delight when they see the familiar faces of the staff. All children have opportunities for group activities, such as circle, story and song time.

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	3

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	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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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	3
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	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