

# Strawberry How Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY391884

**Inspection date**

06/01/2010

**Inspector**

Valerie Block

**Setting address**

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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).

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## Description of the setting

Strawberry How Nursery School opened in the present building in 2004 but changed owners in July 2009. It operates from a single storey, purpose built premises on a small business park, surrounded by residential accommodation, on the outskirts of Cockermouth, Cumbria. The premises has wheelchair access. It is run by a private owner who also manages the provision. Children have access to designated areas for those under two years and those aged two to five years, with an adjacent bathroom and sleeping provision. Both rooms have access to the outdoor play areas.

The nursery is registered for a maximum of 44 children in the early years age group. Of these, 18 can be under two years of age, with 74 children currently on roll. The setting provides childcare from 8am to 6pm, for 51 weeks of the year. The nursery has a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The nursery currently employs 11 staff, all of whom hold early years qualifications. Three hold Early Years Professional Status and/or qualified teacher status. The required staffing ratios are maintained with additional staff when needed. The nursery is on the Early Years Register and is a member of the National Day Nursery Association.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are well cared for, by a supportive, qualified staff team, who have a clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework and know each child well. Generally children are kept safe, and make good progress in their learning and development. There are anti-discriminatory policies in place to make the setting inclusive to all. Parents receive good information about the setting. Liaison with some agencies involved in children's development is well established to help children progress. The setting takes account of local authority advice and support, showing a good attitude and commitment to continual improvement."

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- take all reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children in the outdoor play area are kept to a minimum. (Suitable premises, environment and equipment)
- 27/01/2010

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

- review procedures to improve liaison with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage, to ensure children's progression and continuity of learning and care
- improve the evaluation of the quality of the provision by using input from parents, children and others to make challenging plans for the future
- develop systems to exchange information with parents about children's progress on a more regular basis and encourage parents as partners in their children's learning and development, for example, by giving them ideas as to how to extend their children's learning at home.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children are well safeguarded, as the staff are aware of possible indicators of abuse and understand the clear written procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child. Key staff have had training in this area. Recruitment procedures are very robust, to ensure children are looked after by suitable persons. The setting carries out regular risk assessments and daily checks, to ensure any safety issues are quickly identified and addressed. This means children are kept safe in the premises. There is some temporary building work on the outdoor area to improve the area for the children. Although children are closely supervised, this has led to some hazards for children. For example, fencing has been disturbed and tools have been left within children's reach. The staff and owners have taken immediate action to minimise these identified risks, showing a keen understanding of the need to keep children safe.

All required records, policies and procedures are in place and kept up to date. This contributes to the effective management of the setting. The management have a clear vision for the nursery and have been putting in place challenging action plans since they were registered and continue to do so. They have consulted regularly and effectively with the staff group, who are very motivated to improve the setting as much as they can for the children's benefit. They are working with local authority advisors and take account of their views in their improvement planning. This helps them to identify their strengths and see areas they would like to enhance. The manager and staff team are in the early stages of self-evaluating the service they provide, using Ofsted tools. The views of other interested parties, such as, parents and children have not as yet been sought in detail to inform this process.

The setting works effectively, as the fully qualified staff team are well supported by the management, who promote their continual development. Staffing systems are very robust, ensuring children's needs are well met. The staff receive regular appraisals and are encouraged to attend relevant training to improve their performance. The premises and equipment are of high quality and staff input has led to the provision of an interesting, enabling environment for children to explore. Children of all ages benefit from being able to choose to play indoors or outdoors as the nursery have organised the environment to allow access to each area. The inside area keeps suitably warm as special heat retaining screens have been

provided. Children are encouraged to play their part in providing a sustainable setting, where recycling and other environment friendly procedures are in place.

The owner has implemented a very good web site, to inform parents about the nursery. Information is available about the premises, policies and procedures, as well as information about the EYFS. Parents are able to access photographs of their children at play, using access codes. They also have access to a very informative entrance lobby. Parents are given access to their children's files on request and staff give verbal information to parents about their own children. The setting welcomes the parents into the setting and plans are in place for open evenings, where parents receive appointments with key workers to discuss their children's work and development in more depth. Parents are generally happy with the service provided, complimenting the owners, management and staff, on a well run, friendly service. They suggest that an area for improvement is to improve the exchange of information about children's learning and development and they would also like staff to help them become more involved in their children's learning.

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

Children are relaxed, well settled and spend their time purposefully engaged in a range of interesting activities. Children benefit from having warm relationships with staff. Staff use their skills well to promote children's learning and independence. The staff are always nearby to offer encouragement and support, without being intrusive. The key worker system helps ensure each child feels secure and able to develop a sense of belonging. There are good systems in place for staff to obtain information about children's starting points in learning. They use observation and assessment well to identify children's next steps and incorporate this into plans for activities at the setting. Overall assessment of learning and development does not, however, sufficiently include information from other settings providing EYFS. Children's individual interests are encouraged and planning is flexible, to allow interests to develop within children's play.

Children are developing their independence, as they effectively attend to their own personal care needs and self-select resources. Children feel safe and develop a sense of belonging, as they form close relationships with staff and other children in the setting. They seek out their friends for play and use the space freely, demonstrating that they feel secure. Staff remind children to be careful during play and involve them in practising fire evacuations. These help children to learn about keeping themselves safe. They learn to be healthy, as they are reminded about everyday hygiene routines, such as, washing hands after using the toilet.

All children take part in a wide range of activities, which supports their physical development, both indoors and outdoors. They show good spatial awareness, as they skilfully manoeuvre wheeled toys around the outdoor play area. Manual dexterity is developed, as they learn to apply small pieces to their collages and use tools to apply glue to paper and collage items, with support from staff. Children really enjoy an exciting playtime in the snow. Children take turns, as they pull

friends along on their slides, learning to behave well. Staff talk to children about ice, snow and cold, so children begin to gain knowledge about the world. Young children and babies are encouraged to experiment and be creative, as they explore sand and water, as well as make marks with chubby chinks and crayons. Children satisfactorily begin to learn skills that will help them to be successful in later life, such as, numeracy and literacy. Regular opportunities to count and use numbers within practical experiences and develop children's ideas about shape and size, encourage their mathematical awareness and problem solving skills. A computer is available to older children and electronic toys to younger children, to help them begin to learn about information technology. Children learn to value diversity through activities and the provision of positive images of different groups of people in posters and toys.

## 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

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

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	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	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	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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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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