

Picton Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Sharon Verma

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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

Picton Children's Centre was registered in 2008. It is owned and managed by the governing body of St Hugh's Primary School and Chatham Place Nursery School. Children have access to five rooms within the children's centre and there are three fully enclosed outdoor play areas. The nursery is situated in a residential area in the Picton area of Liverpool. It is open each weekday from 8am to 6pm.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 46 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 77 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Children who use the pre-school room share this with a maximum of 14 children from Chatham Place Nursery School. The nursery serves families living in the local community. It currently supports children who speak English as a second language and children with special educational needs.

There are 13 members of staff, 12 of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to at least National Vocational Qualification at level 3, and one holds a Level 2 qualification. Two members of staff, including the manager, hold degree qualifications and three members of staff are enrolled on the level 4 Early Years Practitioner's Course. Additional staff are employed for food preparation. Staff receive support from and work closely with the headteacher and staff at St Hugh's RC School and Chatham Place Nursery School. The nursery also benefits from the Sure Start facilities available in the same building.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The setting successfully promotes all aspects of children's welfare and development. A high quality, inclusive environment helps ensure children are safe and well cared for, although, there are some minor weaknesses with regard to observational assessments and safeguarding. Close partnerships with parents mean that staff know children well and this helps children make good progress in their learning. Highly effective partnerships with St Hugh's RC School and Chatham Place Nursery School are enhancing the quality of the provision in place. The staff and management team regularly monitor and evaluate the provision, which means any priorities for improvement are quickly identified and acted upon. This ensures that the service is responsive to the needs of the children who attend and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- obtain information about who has legal contact with the child, and who has parental responsibility in

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advance of a child being admitted to the provision (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare).

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

- review the monitoring systems to ensure children's attendance is accurately and consistently recorded
- improve the systems to secure consent for emergency medical advice or treatment to ensure they include time spent both on and off the nursery site
- ensure observation and assessment systems are consistently applied across the various age ranges.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are safeguarded as staff are recruited through a secure selection and vetting procedure. Induction, team meetings and management updates mean staff have a good working knowledge of the policies and procedures including those for child protection. They also receive in-house safeguarding training annually. Staff carry out daily safety checks on the premises and risk assessments have been conducted on the areas used by the children. These actions are complemented by training initiatives and subsequent implementation of procedures such as those to promote the safety of sleeping children by checking on them every ten minutes. Most of the required documentation is in place and well organised, however, there are a few minor weaknesses which may compromise children's health and safety. The nursery does not have information about who has legal contact with and parental responsibility for each child. The current system for recording children's attendance is not sufficiently robust, and although permission to seek emergency medical advice and treatment has been secured, this relates specifically to outings.

Excellent use is made of resources at the setting. Space and equipment are extremely well organised to create a welcoming, stimulating learning environment where children can access learning resources independently both indoors and outside. High adult-to-child ratios, well-qualified staff and the use of government training and funding initiatives which are eagerly sought, ensure good quality of care for the children. For example, staff have recently attended training on how to develop the outdoor learning environment and children are benefiting greatly from the improvements already implemented. They can now explore water in different ways and on different scales and are developing their language and communication skills as they use the spacious pop-up tents for stories and songs outdoors. The provider is also taking well-considered steps to ensure the resources and the environment are sustainable. Children add their waste from snack and lunch to the wormery, and the compost created is then used on their vegetable patch. This commitment to continuous improvement and the effective systems in place for monitoring and analysing the impact of any changes have a positive impact on the overall quality of the provision and the outcomes for children.

Positive partnerships are established with parents and children through good

settling in arrangements and when children move through the nursery. Detailed information about the setting is provided for parents before children start and warm exchanges are shared at arrival and collection times. Parents are kept informed about their child through daily diary sheets, verbal updates, newsletters and involvement such as bringing along photos and items from home to help with new topic work. The nursery also uses 'Billy Bear', who goes home each week with a different child to gain additional information about the children and their development. Excellent partnerships exist between St Hugh's Primary, Chatham Place Nursery School and the children's centre nursery. Expertise, ideas and resources are shared between the three establishments which enhances the provision and raises the quality for all.

Inclusive practice is promoted well at the nursery. Children's differences are valued and celebrated and they are encouraged to share these with other children and staff at the nursery. This enhances children's self-esteem and enriches the learning environment for all the children. Children with special educational needs are supported and have their needs met through Individual Educational Plans. Two members of staff have completed British Sign Language training and have started to teach the children simple signs at circle time. This helps them to develop an understanding of different needs as well as communication skills for the future.

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

Children make good progress and are well supported by an enthusiastic and caring staff team. Staff have a good grasp of the Early Years Foundation Stage and provide a broad range of activities to engage the children with a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated play. Planning is generally good and is underpinned by staff observations and children's interests. There are, however, some slight inconsistencies across the rooms. Those children who speak English as an additional language are supported as staff liaise well with parents and learn some key words so they can communicate with the children. This helps the children to settle and gives them a sense of belonging at the nursery.

Children are challenged to extend their thinking and develop their learning in a variety of interesting ways. For example, children learn about the cycle of living things as they plant, grow and harvest their own vegetables. They learn about the life cycle of the caterpillar as they care for and watch its transformation into a butterfly. During a recent visit to a farm they experienced holding chicks and feeding young goats their milk. Children develop skills for the future as they confidently use the computers in the media area and print out their work to display and take home. Their numeracy skills are promoted regularly as part of the daily routine as well as through carefully planned activities using number songs. The outdoor provision is very good and provides for all areas of children's learning. All-in-one suits and wellingtons mean that children can enjoy outdoor play whatever the weather. They have great fun splashing in puddles after a rainy spell and love using their imaginations to make dens, using netting and large pieces of material, to drape around trees and other objects in the garden. Children are learning to recognise print and letters from their names as they see them displayed around

the room. They have opportunities to attempt mark making for a variety of purposes including lists and appointments in role play areas. Children are developing high levels of personal independence and self-care such as toileting themselves and serving themselves at lunch time. They become aware of their local community with visits to places of interest, such as a local safari park and a world museum in Liverpool, which are enjoyed by all. Babies and younger children's development is promoted through a wide variety of sensory experiences. For example, they enjoy supervised water play, experimenting with nets, fish and pouring water from one jug to another. Treasure baskets and visits to the sensory room are also used to help them develop and explore all the senses. Good-quality interactions and well-organised routines help them to become secure and confident in the nursery. Their faces light up as staff sing familiar songs and they show delight as they practise their new skills of doing the actions to songs such as 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star'.

Staff are polite and courteous to each other, and the children are learning to mirror their example. They use positive methods to manage children's behaviour which help children to learn good social skills and behave well. Older children are involved in drawing up ground rules and these are displayed and conveyed positively, such as, 'caring hands' and 'listening ears'. Children's health at the nursery is promoted to a very high level. Children show an excellent understanding of the importance of following good hygiene and dental routines. The nursery is a part of a tooth brushing scheme and participates in the fluoride varnishing scheme for two to four-year-olds. The four-weekly menu, planned in consultation with the children, offers a wide variety of highly nutritional meals and snacks. Stringent checks in the kitchen and strict hygiene practices in the baby room ensure children's health is not compromised. The importance placed upon physical development, such as weekly physical education sessions at St Hugh's Primary for three and four-year-olds, and the children's recent contribution to the Sportslink DVD help children gain a secure understanding about the importance of regular exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. Staff teach children how to stay safe through regular fire evacuations, discussions about road safety when out in the local community and gentle reminders about safety within the nursery.

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	1
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

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	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	1
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

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