

The Caterpillar Club and Bumble Bees Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	16/03/2010
Inspector	Eileen Grimes
Setting address	Birtley Community Association, Birtley Community Centre, Ravensworth Road, Birtley, Chester le Street, County Durham, DH3 1EN
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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*.

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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 Caterpillar Club and Bumble Bees Pre-School are located in Birtley Community Centre in the Birtley area of Gateshead. The Bumble Bees offers pre-school care for children aged from two and a half to five years old. The Caterpillar Club offers before and after school care for children aged from four to eight years old; however, it may admit children older than this. The group admits children from Birtley East Junior School, Ravensworth, St Joseph's Infant and Junior School, Portabello and Barley Mow.

The Bumble Bees Pre-School is open from 9.15am to 11.45am, Monday to Friday in school term time. The Caterpillar Club is open from 8am to 9.00am and from 3.00pm to 6.00pm in school term time. Both groups are closed on bank holidays.

Both groups have use of the same areas, which are the hall, a large adjoining room and toilets to the back of the premises. There is a small sectioned-off kitchen area in the room. There is outdoor play space to the side of the premises, however, this is also a car parking area and can only be used when safe to do so. There is a local park that is very close to the group that can be used for outdoor play, and the Caterpillar Club has an agreement with a nearby junior school for occasional use of their playground.

There are four staff members working with the pre-school children. There are four members of staff working with the out of school children, and three used for escorts to collect children from various schools. All staff members have appropriate childcare qualifications. There are 24 children on roll in the pre-school group. There are approximately 24 children on roll in the out of school group, who attend on a part-time basis.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

A well-developed knowledge of each child's needs ensures that staff are successful in promoting children's welfare and learning. Children are safe and secure, enjoying their time in the pre school and the out of school club, learning about the world around them in practical ways with sensitive support from staff. There are strong and respectful partnerships with parents and carers ensuring that the needs of all children are met, along with any additional support needs. As a result, children are progressing well. There is strong drive towards further improvement, and the process of evaluating the quality of the provision is developing positively to inform future planning. Since the last inspection both groups have addressed all the actions and recommendations raised.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop systems for self evaluation to promote outcomes for children and maintain continuous improvement
- further develop observations and planning in the pre school to ensure experiences are appropriate to each child's stage of development
- update policies and procedures to clearly identify named members of staff with responsibility for certain areas
- develop links with external agencies to ensure continuity of care and education for children within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare and well-being are effectively promoted as the settings have robust procedures in place for safeguarding children. All staff have a sound knowledge of child protection issues, and regularly attend training to keep updated and informed of Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Stringent checks are carried out to make sure that all staff are suitable to work with children. Detailed risk assessments are conducted both on and off the premises, identifying potential hazards and minimising risks to children. There are a wide range of policies and procedures in place across the two settings. However, some policies do not identify members of staff with responsibility for specific areas.

The managers and their respective teams of well-qualified and experienced staff demonstrate an enthusiasm for the work, with a clear commitment to promoting outcomes for children. The process for evaluating the quality of the provision and its impact on children's progress is in its early stages place, and is being developed with staff. This a key area for further development identified by the managers and the team, in order to the provisions for children and contribute to the overall development of the provisions. Further vision regarding the refurbishment of the outdoor area demonstrates how the settings are keen to drive future improvement, extending learning and development opportunities for all children.

Staff have developed sound relationships with parents based on a mutual respect. This ensures that effective exchanges of information takes place for every child in order to meet specific needs and comply with parents' wishes. They are well informed of their children's progress and activities through the simple but informative daily chats, newsletters, parents evenings and frequent discussions with key workers. Parents speak confidently about their satisfaction, and cite the established and very stable staff group as being a major factor in this process. Arrangements for children with special education needs and/or disabilities are well established. Detailed risk assessments are undertaken to monitor specific needs, such as, increasing staffing ratios where necessary in order to support every child. The setting is highly inclusive, with ramps indoors and outside so that every child can access all parts of the provision. Staff work very closely with parents and other professionals and agencies involved in individual children's progress, such as, physiotherapists, speech therapists and the local authority Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. The partnerships with other providers involved in the delivery

of the EYFS are not so well established yet, marring the development of continuity of experience between settings.

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

Children make strong progress in all areas of development and learning supported by staff who have a secure knowledge of the EYFS. They are valued and respected by staff who work hard to provide a welcoming, secure and interesting environment with a strong emphasis on child-initiated activity. The current process for observing and assessing children's progress is currently being developed. These are linked to the EYFS and do not clearly identify next steps. This hinders how systematic assessment can be tracked, and how further support or extension can be planned. However, staff know each child in their key groups extremely well and can articulate what each child is capable of in the various aspects of their development.

Children feel secure and safe in the setting, seeking out familiar and friendly adults for comfort and reassurance. Staff spend their time alongside children, helping them to discover the world around them as they investigate, explore and feel very settled in the settings. Children enjoy creative activities, from exploring the properties of sand, to mixing paints and modelling with dough. Dressing up and role play are particular favourites for older children, who freely access a varied range of resources easily in order to enjoy their self-chosen play. Verbal and non-verbal communication is effectively promoted, as children chatter and engage in conversation with their friends and the adults. Children enjoy books and stories, for example, they re-tell favourite stories to dolls. Children use good use of mathematic language in their play, such as, calculating how many apples are on the tree when some are added and taken away. A meaningful discussion takes place as one child asks a member of staff if she can touch the ceiling. When she cannot, another child explains that 'a giant can touch the ceiling'.

Children's health and well-being are promoted as they learn in a practical way about healthy eating. They have snacks of various fruits and milk, which children access independently. The risks of the spread of infection are minimised as staff follow well-practised routines, and instruct the children in their personal hygiene sensitively. Discussions take place round the snack table about how fruit is good for them because it 'makes you grow up high'. Specific dietary requirements and feeding routines are adhered to and staff receive regular training in specialised routines where necessary. Children respect the boundaries within both settings. Older children are involved in developing these rules, which are applied consistently by staff. This develops children's understanding of right and wrong. In both groups staff provide positive role models.

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	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

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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

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