

The Secret Garden Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY348737

Inspection date

07/06/2010

Inspector

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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).

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 Secret Garden Day Nursery is privately owned and was registered by the current provider in March 2007. It is located in fully converted premises in Darlington. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor area. Local amenities include shops and schools.

The nursery serves both the local and wider community. It is registered on the Early Years Register and both parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 78 children on roll in the early years age group. The nursery offers before and after school care for children attending the local primary school. The nursery is open from 7.45am to 6pm, Monday to Friday all year round with the exception of bank holidays and at Christmas.

There are 12 members of staff working with the children. All staff are suitably qualified. A full-time cook, part-time administrator and part-time cleaner support the nursery staff. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled at the nursery. Staff are enthusiastic and caring and provide a wide range of fun activities across most areas of learning. As a result, children are making good progress in their learning and development. The management team and staff have a clear understanding of areas for development and appropriate procedures have been established to monitor and evaluate the care and learning they provide. Staff work closely with parents to gather relevant information to meet children's individual needs and ensure that all children are included well at the nursery.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further develop opportunities for under two-year-olds to be outside on a daily basis and to explore natural materials
- further develop the activities to help children to become aware of, explore and question differences and diversity
- develop the organisation of large group time so children do not become distracted.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

All staff demonstrate a good understanding of their role and responsibility with regard to safeguarding children. Consequently, children are well protected. A good range of policies and procedures are in place underpinning the nursery's practice which are regularly reviewed and updated as necessary. Written risk assessments for the indoor and outdoor space as well as outings help to promote children's safety. Appropriate safety equipment, regular checks and close supervision of the children further safeguard them. Children are well protected in the event of an accident; most staff have current first aid certificates and there is a well stocked first aid box in the kitchen. Good systems are in place to allow children access to both downstairs rooms freely while still maintaining their safety when parents and visitors arrive.

Good procedures are in place to monitor and evaluate the care and learning the nursery provides. The management and staff team are committed and enthusiastic about providing a good quality service and to developing their practice. The nursery has positively addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection. For example, all accident records are signed by parents and documentation now has the correct contact address for Ofsted. The nursery has also made major developments to the outdoor provision, including a wild life garden and a separate area for the under two-year-olds. These have a positive impact on promoting good outcomes for children. Resources are plentiful and of a good quality. They include resources to help raise children's awareness of diversity. However, activities to complement their learning and appreciation of the diverse world in which they live are more limited. Good use is also made of the local toy library.

Staff are approachable and friendly and have developed effective communication links with parents. This helps to ensure that children's individual needs can be met well in a comfortable environment. Regular verbal feedback, daily information sheets, along with biannual parent evenings, ensures that parents are kept well informed about their children's care and learning. Feedback from parents is very positive; they speak highly of the care and education that their children receive both verbally at the inspection and through completing anonymous questionnaires. The nursery is fully aware of the need to work in partnership with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage and with other professionals, which they do so effectively when appropriate.

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

Children are secure and have close and caring relationships with the staff, particularly their keyworker. They are beginning to form close friendships with their peers. They are very settled and move around the nursery with confidence. Staff have a good knowledge of the learning and development requirements which helps to promote children's progress towards the early learning goals. Effective

systems are in place to ensure that children receive enjoyable and challenging learning experiences that are tailored to meet their individual needs. There is a good mix of child-initiated and adult-led activities. Observations are used well to plan for the next steps in children's learning. Children's development files are in place and show children's progress. Staff provide an interesting learning environment for children with lots of displays of words, numbers and artwork.

Older children have very good opportunities to enjoy fresh air, no matter what the weather is like, either in the exciting enclosed garden area or on walks; however, babies do not always go outdoors on a daily basis. Older children use their imagination well as they play in the indoor and outdoor role play areas. They are learning to share and take turns as they play board games with the gentle support of the staff. All children have good opportunities to be creative. For example, babies enjoy painting while older children enjoy gluing and sticking with a variety of different materials, including feathers. All children are developing many skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being. For example, they are becoming increasingly confident in information and communication technology, such as programmable toys and computers, skilfully using the mouse and completing simple programmes. Children talk about the trails left by slugs and how they eat plants and stop them growing. Children thoroughly enjoy selecting items from the 'song bag' then singing a related nursery rhyme. However, some children become easily distracted as they have to wait a long time for their turn. Babies enjoy practising their walking skills on the musical mats or climbing into plastic crates as staff sing songs, such as 'row, row, row the boat' to them. Opportunities for babies to explore natural materials indoors are limited.

Staff use praise and encouragement effectively to support children's learning and development as they play. Children learn about dangers and how to stay safe as they play interesting games outdoors, such as using the zebra crossing to learn how to cross the road safely. Children start to manage their own health by learning the importance of washing their hands before eating. The nursery employs its own cook and children enjoy nutritious home cooked meals using locally sourced ingredients where possible. Mealtimes are a social occasion with the children and staff sitting together. Children's independence skills are encouraged as they help to set the tables with brightly coloured cloths and flowers or tidy up resources collecting them together in their tool boxes.

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	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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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