

Learning Land

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY276710
Inspection date 08/03/2010
Inspector Valerie Block

Setting address 65 Derwent Street, Workington, Cumbria, CA14 2DW

Telephone number 01900 601 222

Email

Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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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

Learning Land Private Day Nursery is owned and managed by a private owner. It opened in June 2004 and operates from a converted building in the middle of Workington, Cumbria. All children share access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor play area. The setting is open each weekday from 7.45am to 6pm throughout the year, except for two weeks over the Christmas period and bank holidays.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 91 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 128 children aged from four months to under ten years on roll. The nursery provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. The nursery has a number of children who speak English as an additional language. Children come from the town and surrounding area.

There are 23 staff, including the manager, who hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a warm and welcoming environment where their welfare needs are in the main soundly met and they are making satisfactory progress in their learning and development. Staff form good relationships with parents and carers and exchange information to meet children's needs. Links with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage are being initiated to establish continuity and coherence for children. The nursery shows commitment to continual improvement, for example, improvements to the building have increased facilities for the children as well as for people with disabilities. Self-evaluation is in the early stages of development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review learning and development methodology, in particular, planning systems, staff's interaction with children to extend their learning and babies' access to outdoor play and walks
- review key person arrangements and staff support for children who are settling in as well as room supervisor arrangements in the older baby room.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding procedures. Designated staff, as well as other staff, have attended required training for their

role to protect children. Clear vetting procedures ensure that staff working with children are suitable to do so. Risk assessments are in place for all areas of the provision, and for activities outside the premises, and are reviewed regularly to ensure that risks to children are minimised. Children's health and safety are promoted through effective procedures. For example, nappy change systems are very effective and staff are able to wash their hands at nearby sinks to prevent cross-infection.

All required documentation, policies and procedures are in place as required and the nursery has developed additional records to promote outcomes for children. They are well kept, regularly reviewed and readily available for inspection.

The setting shows commitment to continual improvement by encouraging staff to continue their professional development through training. Staff also have access to childcare periodicals in their staff room to update their professional knowledge. Local authority advice and support to improve the quality of the nursery has been sought, although not always successfully acted upon. The nursery has met recommendations from the last inspection to improve the quality of their service.

Staff supervise the children, making sure they are safe at all times and can access resources, however, staff interaction to extend children's learning is limited. They have organised the available space and resources appropriately to give children opportunities for a range of safe, independent play both indoors and outdoors. Key staff are in place to support children. However, key persons are allocated to new children when they have settled into their playrooms and have shown an attachment to a member of staff. This leaves new children without sufficient support when settling in. Staff are well qualified in early years work and are deployed, in the main, effectively throughout the setting. However, in the walking babies' playroom staff share the room supervisor role, yet not all staff meet the criteria to do so.

Parents are valued and are made very welcome. There is regular information exchange with parents by verbal communication, records and through use of noticeboards, newsletters and open evenings. Parents interviewed are very happy with the provision and also show satisfaction in their responses to the nursery's questionnaires. Links to other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage are not yet fully in place. The nursery has only recently written to providers to request that links be made to exchange relevant information about the children. The need to establish liaison with other agencies to overcome obstacles to children's learning is understood and staff with responsibility for monitoring the development of children with special needs understand their roles and responsibilities.

Children benefit from the setting's commitment to inclusive policies and procedures. All families are made most welcome.

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

Children are generally relaxed, enjoy their time at nursery and are making sound progress as they are cared for by qualified, caring staff. Staff understand the children as individuals and ask parents to keep them updated about their children's developments and interests so that these can be used to develop their interests at nursery. The nursery is currently looking at their observation and assessment planning systems to ensure that activities are informed by children's interest and their assessments. Although the play environments are planned mainly to provide interesting choices, children do not move about the areas always in a free way, exploring according to their interest. In addition, the play environment and activities sometimes do not encourage children's learning. For example, young children paint at a table using long, difficult to hold brushes although more age-appropriate brushes are available. Although staff ensure children are safe and are warm to children, they do not always extend children's learning and thinking. Children are well-behaved as staff remind them of good manners and provide good role models for them. They are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and are developing skills of independence, for example, when using the bathroom or putting on their coats to go outside.

Children feel safe and develop a sense of belonging as they benefit from good safety procedures and form relationships with staff and other children in the setting. Staff remind children to be careful during play and involve them in practising fire evacuations, helping the children learn about keeping themselves safe. They learn about healthy eating as staff encourage them to take regular drinks of water. Children enjoy playing outside showing good spatial awareness as they skilfully manoeuvre wheeled toys around the outdoor play area. They learn about the sounds of letters as they join in phonics sessions with staff. Children enjoy singing nursery rhymes they have selected from a box with items to remind them of favourite songs and children mimic actions the staff show and enjoy joining in, as well as communicating through words and song. The children 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 ideas about shape and size encourage their mathematical awareness and problem solving skills. Electronic toys as well as a computer for older children are available to help them understand technology. Children learn about diversity as the nursery provide a satisfactory amount of positive images of diversity in activities 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

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	3
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

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