

Happy Smiles

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY347260
Inspection date	26/04/2010
Inspector	Deborah Wylie
Setting address	Leadgate County Infant School, West Street, CONSETT, County Durham, DH8 7PN
Telephone number	01207 583 583
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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

Happy Smiles is managed by a private company known as Leadgate Child Centre Ltd, and was registered in 2007. It operates from rooms within Leadgate County Infant School in the village of Leadgate near Consett in County Durham. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 32 children aged under eight years may attend the setting at any one time. The setting currently takes children from birth to five years of age. The setting is open Monday to Friday from 7.45am to 6pm throughout the year, excluding public holidays and the Christmas period.

There are currently 44 children on roll who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and on both parts of the Childcare Register.

The setting employs eight members of staff to work with the children. Of these, seven staff hold appropriate level 3 early years qualifications and one member of staff holds a level 2 and is working towards a level 3 qualification. One member of staff is working towards a foundation degree in early years which will lead onto Early Years Professional Status. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Appropriately qualified staff, who are particularly knowledgeable about children's care needs, offer suitable learning experiences at Happy Smiles. Positive partnerships both with the host school and with other professionals support all children to make at least satisfactory progress, and some make good progress, in a safe and welcoming environment. Rigorous and effective self-evaluation has established priorities for improvement. The manager's open and honest approach to leadership, alongside highly positive partnerships, has recently created a strong capacity for the setting to improve.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure that children are offered more opportunities for adult-led activities delivered through indoor and outdoor play (Organisation) 03/05/2010
- ensure that risk assessments are reviewed regularly, at least once a year or more frequently where the need arises. (Suitable premises, environment and equipment) 31/05/2010

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

- develop further staff questioning techniques to ensure children receive regular high quality interactions from all adults throughout the session
- improve current systems to ensure that staff are aware of individual children's achievements, within age-related expectations, and can plan their next steps accordingly.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Thorough self-evaluation has taken account of the views of staff, children and parents. The manager has a clear picture of areas for improvement. Staff are recruited suitably, and a recent review of the recruitment procedures has led to a more robust recruitment system. Children are safeguarded appropriately at the setting as the staff know how to respond to minor accidents and record them, acting promptly to comfort the child and apply basic first aid when necessary. The manager has accurately identified that the current process of risk assessments have not been reviewed annually, which is a legal requirement of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Staff are keen to attend training and a recent analysis of training needs has been completed to highlight areas for professional development that will support the setting's priorities for improvement. Planning and record keeping systems are receiving support from external professionals. Although they currently support children to make satisfactory progress in their learning, they do not yet track children's progress to ensure children are achieving within the age-related expectations.

Resources are deployed appropriately at the setting. High quality furniture is arranged to create interesting learning areas throughout the setting. The manager has accurately identified that there is less availability of smaller resources to support learning, but a recent government grant has been earmarked to supplement the existing provision. Similarly, the manager is taking actions to enhance the partnership with parents and carers through the introduction of 'moving on' books and additional meetings to discuss their child's progress. Equality and diversity are supported appropriately at the setting by a wide range of photographs and books that offer images and stories from other cultures. The setting works in partnership with a wide range of professionals from other services, such as portage, speech and language therapists, and staff from the host school, to give the best support to children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Systems are still developing to offer opportunities for staff from the setting to identify at the earliest possible stage if children need additional support.

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

Recently improved systems and better communication between staff and parents at Happy Smiles support children to have sound emotional security when they attend nursery. Staff greet the children warmly and key workers chat informally to individual children about family celebrations and topics that are unique to them. Children are excited at nursery and explore the wide range of learning opportunities, especially in the outdoor areas. Young babies chuckle aloud when they are tickled, while lying on a mound of cosy cushions to support their muscle development. The environment is established to encourage children to be independent. For example, children put their own aprons on when they use the water tray outside and they are encouraged to feed themselves from a young age at mealtimes. The best opportunities for independence take place when resources are differentiated to meet children's needs. For example, at mealtimes the youngest children drink their water from beakers with lids, while the older children use open cups. Children are encouraged to stay healthy by consistent reminders from staff about wiping their noses when needed and then washing hands. They run freely in the outdoors, using tricycles and ride-on vehicles to propel themselves. Mealtimes are highly sociable occasions where all staff and children sit around tables and children use individual cloth napkins effectively. They thoroughly enjoy the healthy and nutritious meals which are produced on a rolling four-weekly menu. There is mostly good behaviour throughout the day as children are aware of the boundaries and rules that promote positive behaviour.

Progress is satisfactory for most children and is especially good for children who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the current practice of offering only a small number of adult-led activities throughout the week does not offer a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities as is required by the Early Years Foundation Stage. Some adults are positive role models offering good opportunities for learning through high quality, open-ended questioning techniques. However, this is not yet consistent throughout the team and this restricts the progress made by children and, therefore, the development of their skills for the future. Children's welfare needs are promoted well at the nursery and staff know the routines very well, for example, animated singing sessions before lunch engage all the children while staff set the tables. There are trips to local farms and visitors such as the emergency services, which stimulate learning. These activities offer sound opportunities from which children can learn. The positive partnerships with school and the adjacent children's centre ensure that the children have access to a wider range of resources and experiences, such as the shared outdoor areas, the sensory room and the toy library.

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	2

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	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
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	3

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	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