

Longtown Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Gary Kirkley

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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

Longtown Pre-School opened in the early 1980's. It operates from three rooms in a temporary classroom located within the grounds of Longtown Primary School. The pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 20 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 10 nursery education grant-funded three-year-olds and four funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or difficulties.

The group opens on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday during school term-times. Sessions are from 9.00am until 3.00pm.

Two full-time members of staff work with the children. One of the joint supervisors holds a teaching degree, and the other joint supervisor holds a degree in child care. The setting is part of a quality assurance scheme and receives support from an Early Years Foundation Stage mentor from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The playgroup meets children's needs well and the setting has a significant number of outstanding features. Since the last inspection, there has been a change in the leadership and management from January 2010. This has been instrumental in embedding ambition and driving improvement forward. There is now an outstanding capacity to improve, as evidenced by all previous recommendations being systematically addressed, the creation of an improvement plan, linked to self-evaluation and the number of initiatives created to ensure high quality outcomes for children. The setting is highly inclusive, and is able to take children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review the development of the outdoor play areas.
- explore potential training on cultural diversity
- become more aware of naturally occurring opportunities for developing future skills

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The two joint supervisors have a clear vision of how they want the playgroup to develop and they share this vision very well with each other, partners and parents.

The playgroup is fully compliant with all statutory requirements and safeguarding policies are excellent. The safety of the children is at the heart of all that the playgroup does. The process of safeguarding is outstanding, with all staff checked against Criminal Records Bureau vetting standards and all qualifications registered and recorded. Staff are particularly well qualified, one being a teacher with a degree and the other with a degree in childcare. The security of the site is excellent, with one entrance only within a shared area of the primary school. All records relating to health and safety, accidents, risk assessments, the administration of medicines and fire drills are up-to-date, with no serious incidents reported. Within the last six months alone, staff have undertaken additional training on safeguarding, health and safety, first aid, food hygiene and fire procedures. There are plans to engage with the local police and fire services. One supervisor has a background in working with special educational needs children and therefore the setting is highly suitable for those attending with additional learning needs. Although there are currently no children in the playgroup for whom English is an additional language, it would be prudent to explore training opportunities relating to cultural diversity in the event of such children attending.

Over time, the playgroup has developed excellent partnerships with the school on the shared site and the local authority, who supply advice through their early years service. This means that up-to-date training is available, as well as moderation of the developing process of self-evaluation. The self-evaluation document is highly evaluative and leads to excellent continuous improvement. From this an improvement plan lays out specific issues and strategies for further improvement, such as a review the development of the outdoor play areas. This ongoing process is already strongly embedded into the ethos of the management of the playgroup. Parents are kept particularly well informed about all issues relating to the care and progress of their child. The newsletters are positive and helpful, with a notice board supplying further details about the playgroup. The profiles of the 'learning journeys' of all children are freely available to all parents on a daily basis. All parents interviewed confirmed that they are completely satisfied with the childcare arrangements and the level of support offered by the playgroup. All parents would recommend it unreservedly. There are excellent resources available for the children to play and learn with, with the further development of improved free flow play imminent, so that staff can become more aware of naturally occurring opportunities for developing future skills.

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

The impact of the improvements since the last inspection means that the outcomes for all of the children attending are generally outstanding. They thrive under the nurture and care of the playgroup. They enjoy the activities and make progress at their own pace; this is confirmed by the happy faces of the children and their own parents. On the afternoon of the inspection, all children and their parents were involved in sports day, which showed the progress that children had made. All were able to join safely in the healthy activities of running and in a competitive and collaborative spirit. All elements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are developed through child-initiated activities and through more formal interventions by staff. In

the morning session children sang together, before their involvement in a wide range of activities. For instance, some had been making marks in the newly formed role-play area, while others had particularly enjoyed making bubbles outside. Previously, children had developed the theme of the seaside, using sand and the paddling pool. The playgroup uses its pretty setting for walks in the woods and hills to gain a wider understanding and knowledge of the world.

Children are highly safe, acting safe throughout pre-school sessions. They develop the notion of adopting healthy lifestyles excellently. Pre-School sessions are a mixture of active play and moments of calm and reflection, such as snack time and group time. The food and drink offered by the setting is nutritious. The playgroup is able to access the food from the school on site, demonstrating high levels of collaboration and making the transition to the next stage of education more seamless. Children were observed sharing at the break session during the sports day. They showed the developing social skills of waiting patiently, taking turns and helping each other. For one girl, the level of tiredness was too much and her mother came to take her home. Other children, showing deep concern made pictures for her to cheer her up and to take home. This level of care contributes to the outstanding behaviour of the children. Staff are very calm and patient, with the highest of expectations of all children; the children respond by replicating this adult behaviour.

Standards of hygiene are excellent, with children developing the skills of independence which will help them to ensure cleanliness in later life. The standard of the hygiene facilities within the playgroup is excellent.

All progress is systematically recorded, developing into an outstanding profile of each child's learning journey, which is a highly informative record of what they can and cannot do, in preparation for the next stage of their education. Parents confirm the usefulness of their child's file. All children are developing good future skills through their time at the playgroup.

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	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
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