

Smallworld Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY267912
Inspection date 11/01/2011
Inspector Andrea Paulson

Setting address Ashfield Infant School, Newlands Lane, Workington,
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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

Smallworld Pre-school is privately owned and managed by Smallworld Pre-School and Link Club Ltd. It was registered in 2003 and operates from a modular, self-contained building within the grounds of Ashfield Infant School in Workington, Cumbria. Children have access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 26 children aged under eight years may attend the setting at any one time. The setting currently takes children from two to eight years of age. The setting is open Monday to Friday during term time from 8am to 6pm and includes a before and after school club. Children can attend for a variety of sessions and come from the local area.

There are currently 56 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The setting is in receipt of funding for early education. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. There are nine members of staff who work directly with the children. Of these, seven hold a qualification in early years, including one who holds 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 good.

Children make good progress in this inclusive setting, where effective staff interaction ensures that their individual needs are met well. Children are kept safe and healthy through the consistent implementation of comprehensive policies and procedures. The excellent organisation of resources is a particular strength of the setting. Planning for children's learning is mostly clear, well-informed and presented. The level of engagement with parents and carers is outstanding, and the good partnership with the host school supports children's progress. Self-evaluation is inclusive and demonstrates a good capacity for continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the observation and assessment system to ensure children's planned next steps are clearly linked to their individual learning and development needs
- improve the regular two-way flow of information with all other early years settings which children attend to ensure continuity of care and learning.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The experienced and enthusiastic leaders ensure that children are consistently safeguarded. Risk assessments are implemented well by staff who are constantly alert to keep children and adults safe. The knowledgeable staff members work closely as a team to carry out the comprehensive and inclusive policies and procedures. Robust recruitment and induction procedures ensure all adults are suitable to work with children. The manager and staff have an ambitious vision for the future and work very hard to develop their practice and improve the learning environment for children. Self-evaluation includes the views of children, staff, parents and carers and demonstrates clear aims for future improvements.

The skilful management and staff provide a colourful, challenging environment with imaginative displays, which include children's work. The creative deployment of an excellent range of resources results in children benefiting from a rich learning environment both indoors and outdoors. The organisation of staff is highly effective and all play areas are easily accessible. This contributes to the significant number of choices for children, which promotes their confidence and self-motivation. The key worker system is effective in ensuring that each child's unique qualities are acknowledged and valued, with staff providing sensitive and flexible individual care.

Children become aware of the wider world through many practical activities and resources that reflect the diverse world in which they live. Staff dedicate extensive time getting to know children and their families, fostering excellent relationships and helping to ensure that children settle quickly and feel secure. Children's progress is shared regularly with parents and carers to further enhance the continuity of their learning between home and the setting. Parental feedback includes many highly positive comments. Parents particularly comment on the sensitive and caring staff, the value of the half-termly meetings, and how much their children enjoy the interesting activities provided. The setting's partnership with the host school contributes to the continuity of children's care, learning and progress, and supports their transfer into school. However, although the setting has made contact with other early years settings that children attend, staff have not yet fully established a regular two-way flow of information.

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

Children make good progress in their learning and development. Staff monitor children's progress through mostly thorough systems of observation, assessment and planning to ensure a good balance across the areas of learning. A minor exception is that although staff identify the next steps in children's learning, written observations and assessments do not highlight their individual learning and development needs. However, staff work hard to support the unique qualities of each child. They are committed to providing children with stimulating experiences, which enable them to enjoy and achieve to a good level.

Children concentrate well as they make shapes in malleable play materials and build models. They confidently use their imagination during role play in the 'builder's yard'. Children listen well to stories and have many opportunities to identify letters and sounds. They learn new words such as 'helicopter' and develop their reading and writing skills well. Children eagerly create new colours when hand-painting. They work out how to roll balls along pieces of drainpipe and explore objects using binoculars. The excellent range of resources and activities on offer allow children to make choices and to build on their interests. This promotes their independence and enables them to develop their ideas in their own time. Staff are skilful in promoting spontaneous learning as they encourage children to identify colours and shapes. Children have many opportunities to become familiar with numbers as they, for instance, count the elephants and work out if there are more girls or boys. They match and sort resources as they tidy up. Letters, shapes and numbers are abundantly displayed to reinforce children's learning.

Children learn about healthy lifestyles with many opportunities for physical play. They enjoy group games outside where activities build physical strength, coordination and skills. The outdoor play provision creates a stimulating environment where children have much fun and benefit regularly from fresh air and daylight. Children understand about healthy eating as they enjoy nutritious snacks and freshly cooked meals. They develop good understanding of health and hygiene through consistent practices and familiar routines. Children feel safe in the secure environment and become aware of personal safety as they practise fire drills, and learn how to keep safe near roads. Their skills for the future are further developed as they use the computer mouse with increasing control. They are very well behaved and work together as they share toys, take turns and tidy up. Children are treated with warmth and friendliness so that they feel valued and grow in confidence.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
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	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	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