

Places For Children

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

ISP Inspection Janet Fairhurst

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

Places for Children Nursery opened in 2006. The nursery is purpose built on one level and is based within the Sure Start Children's Centre situated in the Newbiggin Hall Estate, Newcastle. Children are cared for in an open-plan area within smaller groups according to their age and stage of development. An enclosed outside play area is available. The nursery opens from 8am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year, closing only for Bank Holidays and the period between Christmas and New Year.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is registered to provide care for 49 children under the age of eight years. There are 98 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. There are 15 members of staff working with the children, including the manager, all of whom hold a relevant qualification.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery provides a happy, welcoming environment where all children are well cared for and make good progress. Organisation of resources is generally good. Comprehensive policies and procedures ensure the safety and welfare of the children. There is a strong and positive partnership with parents and other agencies. Management and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to improvement through effective self-evaluation of the provision, resulting in good outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve observation and assessments for babies to ensure the area of learning regarding problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is given equal emphasis
- review the organisation of meal and snack times to ensure that children's spontaneous play is not interrupted
- improve children's opportunities to engage in role play by providing them with more exciting and stimulating resources, paying particular attention to the home area.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Child protection procedures are robust and understood by staff. As a result, children are effectively safeguarded. All staff have attended safeguarding training

and are confident in being able to recognise potential signs and symptoms of abuse. There are effective recruitment and induction procedures in place to check staff's suitability to work with children and ensure that they know their responsibilities. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place and have been updated to be fully in line with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. These are understood and implemented well by staff, ensuring the needs of all children are met. Detailed risk assessments of the premises and outings are in place to minimise risks to children. All staff hold a valid first aid certificate. A clear written policy regarding sick children and the effective recording of all accidents and emergency contacts further promote children's health and well-being, positively safeguarding children.

The premises and resources are well maintained and suitable for their purpose. Staff are deployed well within the setting, ensuring ratios are maintained and that children are well supported and have opportunities to access a range of age appropriate resources and activities. However, although the nursery has very good resources to promote mathematical development, they are situated where not all children can easily see them and therefore tend not to access them spontaneously. Similarly, although they are managed well, daily routines, especially around meal and snack times, result in children spending a significant amount of time sat at a table or in the bathroom washing before and after the meal. More often than not, children's play is interrupted in order for them to prepare for their snacks, thus hampering their flow of play.

The staff work well in partnership with parents and carers to ensure children's individual needs are met. They successfully utilise notice boards, newsletters, home books, daily communication and open evenings to ensure parents are kept well informed about the organisation of the nursery and events. Parents are encouraged to provide information about their child when starting at the nursery, enabling the child's key person to know their individual interests, welfare needs and developmental starting points to inform the initial planning. Staff exchange information daily with parents about children's care and regularly share children's learning and development records. Staff try hard to encourage parents to become involved in their child's learning. For example, using story and activity bags and nursery home reading schemes. Parents speak highly of the setting, particularly commenting that they have enjoyed watching their children's confidence and communication skills grow and develop.

The nursery is proactive in working with children with special educational needs and disabilities and, as a result, all children are well supported and fully included in the setting. Key staff take responsibility, offer one-to-one care where necessary and have completed relevant training. Staff demonstrate a very good understanding of the needs of individual children and are committed to working with parents and relevant outside agencies to ensure that specific care and education is provided for all children. The partnership with local schools is also strengthened by occasional visits by staff, who meet the children before they make the transition into formal education.

The management and staff have clear aims and objectives for the nursery. They work as an effective team to bring about improvements and to raise the quality of

the provision for the children and families. There are distinct methods for self-evaluation, which include using the Ofsted evaluation form, regular staff meetings and actively seeking views from parents and children. Recommendations from the last inspection have been addressed fully, ensuring children's welfare is effectively safeguarded and their learning and development is promoted well. Future areas for development are clearly identified, well chosen and include some which were identified during the inspection process. For example, reviewing meal times to prevent children's play from being interrupted.

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

Children throughout the nursery are happy, settled and secure. They enjoy the time they spend at nursery, making good relationships with staff and each other. The key person system contributes to children's sense of belonging. Children become happily involved in play situations, enjoying the support of adults who interact to enhance children's play and promote learning. All children make good progress as staff use their good knowledge and understanding of how children learn to effectively support and promote their development through activities which reflect their interests. Staff make effective use of their regular observations of what children know and can do across most of areas of learning to identify individual children's next steps in learning. However, the area of problem solving, reasoning and numeracy is not always given sufficient emphasis, especially with very young children.

Positive images of diversity are evident throughout the nursery and staff carefully consider the needs of individual children when planning and implementing activities. For example, children who have English as an additional language are supported as staff work with parents to provide the best methods of supporting their learning, such as, using an interpreter to exchange vital information. Children are keen to learn, engage in play well and are eager to try new experiences, showing confidence as they approach adults to ask questions and share information. They know and follow the routines of the day, respond well to adults and their behaviour is good. Children show developing independence, making decisions as to where they want to play as well as attending to their own needs, such as putting on their own coats to go outdoors.

Children generally have good opportunities to use and develop their imaginations. For example, they create their own scenarios using small world figures and build models using play dough and inter-connecting blocks. They also have access to role play activities, such as the home area. However, this particular area is bland and uninteresting, therefore, children are not inclined to use it. There are opportunities for children to learn about the world around them through a number of planned activities and play materials. For example, children develop awareness of different festivals as they celebrate Chinese New Year, Diwali and Ramadan.

Language and communication skills are strongly promoted throughout all aspects of nursery life. Many children are confident communicators and clearly express their thoughts and ideas. Staff use methods of communication well, such as a signing system, particularly to support children learning English and very young children's communication skills. Babies are provided with new opportunities to explore and stimulate their senses. For example, they use a good range of natural materials, such as, shaving foam, gloop, and jelly, responding well to what they see, smell, touch and feel. In the wet room, as the babies sit in the water tray filled with bubbly warm water, they squeal with delight as they splash and slap the water and thoroughly enjoy the interaction of the staff as they play. Children enjoy visits, such as, going to the dentist surgery where they look at the equipment, sit on the dentist chair and talk about how to care for their teeth. Older children have access to computers and computer programmes which encourage them to use information and communication technology to support their learning, while very young children access more interactive toys, pressing the buttons and dials that cause sound and light.

Staff manage children's behaviour well and make sure that they understand the importance of considering others, for example, sharing and taking turns. They reinforce positive behaviour effectively with praise, reward stickers and certificates. Children are beginning to understand the importance of regular exercise through a wide range of physical activities both inside and outside which they enjoy and engage in. There are good nappy-changing facilities and staff take steps to ensure that health and hygiene practices are complied with, such as the wearing of gloves and aprons and the wiping down of mats with disinfectant after use. Children learn ways to stay safe through reference to effective group procedures which the staff consistently reinforce. These include reminding children to walk indoors and the reason why they wear high visibility jackets during their outings. Participation in regular fire drills helps to raise the children's awareness of what to do in emergencies.

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	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

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