

# Puffins at Newton House

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique reference number**

EY300246

**Inspection date**

25/01/2011

**Inspector**

Leoarna Mathias

**Setting address**

156 Newton Road, Torquay, Devon, TQ2 7AQ

**Telephone number**

01803 612446

**Email**

**Type of setting**

Childcare on non-domestic premises

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011

## 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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## **Description of the setting**

First registered in 2002, Puffins at Newton Road operates from a converted semi-detached house on the outskirts of Torquay, in Devon. It is part of the Puffins of Exeter group of childcare centres. The accommodation is organised into a self-contained baby unit at the rear of the building, toddler rooms on the ground floor and the three to four-year-olds accommodated on the first floor. There are secure, grassed and equipped gardens to the rear of the house.

The nursery is open from 7.30am until 6.30pm Monday to Friday all year round. The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 48 children on both the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. At present there are 61 children enrolled all of whom are in the early years age group. Children with special educational needs or English as an additional language can be supported. A permanent staff of 16 support the provision, all of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification, including three who hold NVQ Level 4 qualification status. The nursery also employs a cook and a maintenance operative.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are cared for in a nursery that prioritises the meeting of their individual needs well. Planning and observation systems are robust, allowing staff to quickly become familiar with each child's achievements. The whole team works particularly well in order to meet the particular challenges faced by children with Special Educational Needs and / or physical disabilities, as well as adopting very good practice in relation to their child protection responsibilities. Relationships with the parents and carers of children are secure, as staff readily share information about children's progress, and find innovative ways to encouraging parents and carers to meaningfully contribute to children's development at home. The staff have a positive approach to their ongoing professional development, and attending a broad range of training is a clear priority, as is encouraging staff retention through a strong appraisal system. In turn, these measure serve to improve the quality and continuity of care children receive. While there are minor weaknesses at times in the delivery and evaluation of some activities, when taken overall, staff are well organised, documentation systems are in good order, and the variety of external audits, routinely carried out to examine practice across a number of areas throughout the year, encourages a cycle of continuous improvement.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- encourage regular self-evaluation on the part of staff in relation to their

- ongoing daily practice with children
- extend further the staff team's ability to fully utilise naturally arising opportunities to support children's learning and development

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Children's safety is particularly well promoted. A secure system of monitoring access to the building is in place, and visitors are properly recorded and given clear orientation advice. Risk assessments of the building are extremely comprehensive and regularly reviewed, and any identified hazards are quickly remedied by the onsite maintenance operative. External health and safety audits are also undertaken to bring a further perspective on the management of risk. Staff supervise their charges closely throughout the day, for example, by checking sleeping babies frequently. Plans for dealing with emergency situations, such as a fire, are clearly laid down, and fire safety is also properly monitored, with regular equipment checks and fire drills. Staff work very hard to ensure their safeguarding practice is of high quality. Aply led by a skilled Child Protection Officer, they adopt a proactive approach to meeting the needs of a range of children, working very closely with outside agencies to support children facing particular challenges, whilst ensuring that their knowledge of appropriate child protection procedures is thoroughly up to date.

The leadership and management of the nursery have succeeded in creating a coherent and stable staff team who work well together. A innovative apprenticeship scheme enables the nursery to benefit from an increasingly skilled workforce. The senior staff of both the nursery and the chain as a whole have a clear vision of the quality of care they are intending to provide. Team meetings are regular and used to share best practice, and senior staff also have regular opportunities to meet with their peers across the nursery chain. The three-monthly appraisal system is robust, allowing training needs to be quickly identified and met, with skills and knowledge gained in this way then cascaded across the team, so that all practitioners benefit. Putting minor weaknesses in the ongoing evaluation of adult practice to one side, formal evaluation systems, including those carried out by an external agency, demonstrate on the part of the staff team a capacity to identify areas for improvement, and to take action. For example, parents highlighted a need to understand better the planning and observation system, and in response a special parents' event was held in order to share this information. Systems for ensuring policies and other documentation remain up to date are appropriate, and recommendations from previous inspections are carried out in full.

Parents are given fulsome opportunities to be involved in their child's learning and development. Staff work hard to ensure that there is a genuine two-way flow of information between themselves and parents and carers, using both informal discussion and regular formal paper systems to invite contributions to the planning for each individual child from his or her family. Parents can attend regular parent's evenings, and receive informative newsletters, as well as accessing pleasing notice boards within the nursery. During this inspection parents and carers took time to

contribute positive views of the care their child receives. Parents and children alike benefit from the nursery's strong capacity to work in partnership with outside agencies in order to support children facing particular challenges. For example, children with Special Educational Needs and/or physical disabilities have their needs closely monitored by a very skilled Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, who uses her skills and considerable experience to access meaningful support from other professionals for the children in her care. Through this and other measures she succeeds in enabling the whole staff team to develop effective strategies for supporting their charges, guaranteeing such children genuine equality of opportunity while they attend. Beyond this, the nursery is exploring other ways in which to develop partnerships with other settings that some of their children attend, so as to further ensure good levels of continuity of care.

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

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. Throughout the nursery, children are enthusiastic learners, secure in the pleasing, warm relationships they have with staff. Children are helped to recognise their own feelings and the feelings of others through a range of activities, and as a result of a consistently applied behaviour management approach from staff, they are willing to show kindness and give of their best throughout the session. Children play co-operatively with success, building a tower together using large blocks, discussing how high it might get. Developing independence skills are also promoted, for example, as two year old children serve their own vegetables onto their plate at lunch time, or finding their own names to register in the pre-school room. There is a strong emphasis on promoting the language and literacy skills of children, with staff using effective evidence-based strategies to encourage the conversational skills of every child. Books are a prominent feature of the programme, with older children enjoying one to one support for their listening and reading skills daily, and writing and mark making resources are readily available for children to freely access throughout the nursery. Similarly, children are routinely exposed to language that enables them to develop an understanding of concepts such as large, small, fast and slow. They access puzzles, games and construction equipment which help them to learn problem solving approaches, and they learn in a number rich environment. Gaining an understanding of the world around us is regularly encouraged. For example, babies shine torches in the 'dark tent', their curiosity ignited as they manipulate objects and the light in this unusual resource. Older children show a clear familiarity with the life cycle of a caterpillar, and this learning is consolidated in a variety of ways during one session, as they talk about the caterpillar eating a leaf in a jar, act out being an egg, caterpillar, cocoon and butterfly, and then hunt for caterpillars while in the garden. There are a reasonable range of resources that promote their appreciation of our diverse society, and regular trips out to local places of interest, such as the harbour. Children access an interesting range of activities which promote their creativity and imagination. They 'mix' porridge, exploring its texture, using cooking utensils and other items. They paint with cotton wool, explore the feel of shaving foam, and use picture cards to 'write' their own story. They enjoy

music making and show familiarity with a range of songs. Children's physical skills are growing as they enthusiastically join in music and movement sessions, dance with scarves, use large equipment outside, play group games and move freely outside with ease.

The staff team have embraced the Early Years Foundation Stage. They carefully plan a varied and interesting range of activities, drawing upon their secure knowledge of each child's interests and abilities. They deploy themselves well, ensuring that they are on hand to support children's learning at all times, and taking up most of the opportunities to promote children's understanding that arise throughout the day. They also make time to observe and assess their charges regularly, and these clearly recorded observations are then used to inform the next cycle of activity planning. Space, resources and toys are well organised, with babies cared for in a calm and homely room, and older children free to move and access readily available equipment. While it is clear at a less formal level that the team is able to reflect upon adult input and the success or otherwise it has in promoting children's progress, they have not yet established a routine process of evaluating their own practice as they work directly with children. Nevertheless, staff are enthusiastic about building on their skills, working hard to integrate knowledge gained through training into their daily practice, and sharing good ideas across the whole chain to which the nursery belongs.

Children have a quickly growing understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, as part of a group task, they travel around the garden placing 'hazard signs' on objects that might hurt them if not treated with care, and can then accurately discuss with their carers why these objects pose a hazard. Their good health is also promoted effectively. They eat nutritious meals prepared on the premises and enjoy access to a range of healthy snacks that include plenty of fruit. They learn to manage their personal hygiene while toileting and are consistently encouraged to wash their hands before eating. Documentary systems that underpin the maintenance of their medical health are in good order, and are completed in close partnership with parents, in order that they are fully informed of all incidents and accidents.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	1
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
--	---

### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



## **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
--	-----