

Puffins in the City

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY300240
Inspection date 11/04/2011
Inspector Samantha Powis

Setting address Puffins at Southernhay, Keble House, Southernhay
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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

Puffins of Exeter Ltd in the City opened in 1999. It is one of a group of childcare facilities operated by a private company who have several other nurseries within the South West of England. The nursery operates from the lower ground floor of Keble House in Southernhay, in the centre of Exeter, Devon. Children are cared for in three age-groups, using five play areas and a baby sleep room. The nursery is largely open plan, with transparent partitions dividing the areas. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area which is a short walk from the nursery. Children attend from a wide catchment area as most of their parents travel to work on the site.

The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6.00pm for 51 weeks of the year. The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. They may care for up to 70 children from birth to under eight years. There are currently 95 children on roll. The nursery welcomes children in receipt of government funding for two, three and four years olds. The nursery supports children who learn English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The setting employs 24 staff, seven hold a level 4 qualification in childcare, four staff hold level 3 qualifications and four hold level 2 qualifications. Six staff are currently working towards a level 2 qualification. The setting is supported by a senior management team from the company's head office in Exeter.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy their time at the nursery. Overall, the procedures followed by staff help to promote and protect children's health and safety and support their learning and development. Very good relationships are established with parents which helps to ensure staff have a detailed understanding of each child's individual needs, routines and preferences to promote consistency and continuity. Effective systems are in place to review and evaluate all areas of practice to ensure that positive changes continue to be made to improve the outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- further consider the organisation of resources and the activities offered to ensure all children are supported and challenged as they play
- review the organisation of routines such as hand washing, to reduce

- disruption for groups of children and better support children's health
- review arrangements when escorting children from the nursery to the outdoor play area to ensure safety.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Overall, the procedures in place to keep children safe are good. Staff have a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regards to child protection. They attend training to keep their knowledge up-to-date and have a confident awareness of the settings own safeguarding policies and procedures as these are included in their initial induction and referred back to at regular staff meetings. Rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures are followed to assure staff's suitability to work with children. Good attention to safety and security within the nursery ensures children remain safe. Risk assessments are completed on all areas throughout the nursery and regularly reviewed to ensure any safety issues are identified and addressed promptly. However, some trips outside of the nursery, for example as children travel from the nursery to the outdoor play area, have not been fully assessed to ensure the arrangements consistently support children's safety. Documentation is used very well to support children's safety. For example, accident reports are reviewed to identify areas for improvement to prevent an accident re-occurring.

The nursery team work well together to meet the needs of each child. They are supported by a strong upper management team who offer support, advice and guidance. Staff are actively encouraged and supported in increasing their own skills to better meet the needs of the children they care for. Some staff have recently completed training on the 'Every Child a Talker' project, and are starting to implement strategies to include more 'communication friendly spaces' within the nursery to increase children's language skills. Staffing arrangements, including an effective key-person system, mean that children are cared for by adults who are well known to them helping them to feel safe and secure as their needs are well known and consistently met. Most areas of the nursery are used well to support children, however, sometimes, movement of children throughout areas of the nursery has a negative impact on children in other areas and on the effectiveness of supporting their ongoing health. For example, as one group of children travel through the pre-school room to access the toilet facilities, the older children's group time is disturbed and the concentration of some children is affected. Also, as children line up to return to their area, they sit on the floor, reducing the positive effects of the hand washing routine they have just followed.

Comprehensive procedures are in place to evaluate all areas of practice throughout the nursery. Outside professionals, senior management, staff and parents are all involved in identifying what works well and what needs to be improved. This approach ensures positive changes continue to be made to support the needs of children in the setting. For example, changes in the organisation of areas used by the youngest children have resulted in improved opportunities for physical development and social skills. The nursery has made improvements in most areas

since their last inspection, children's health is better supported through use of individual flannels and cot bedding and steps have been taken to provide increased privacy for older children when using toilet facilities. Lunch times are now a happy time for the majority of children as they receive good support from staff who understand their individual needs. Changes have been implemented with regards to planning and supporting the learning and development needs of all children, however, there continues to be some lack of challenge for older and more able children as they engage in activities.

Highly effective relationships are established with parents which means children feel settled and secure. Key staff carry out home visits to many families prior to children starting at the nursery, providing excellent opportunities for children, parents and the key person to get to know each other well. Parents are provided with detailed information about all aspects of the provision through the prospectus, newsletters and notice boards. Parents are fully involved in their child's learning. They are regularly invited to share their child's learning journey with the key person and are asked to update staff about their child's interests, preferences and any significant events, to help staff include this as they plan for each child's next steps. They attend open days, where they learn about areas of the provision and projects the children are involved in, increasing their own knowledge and understanding. Daily exchange of information through children's diaries ensures parents are well informed helping to ensure continuity. Parents state that they are very happy with the nursery and the care their children receive. They feel they are provided with good information and are confident that staff take any issues they raise seriously and ensure prompt action is taken to address any concerns. Good links are made with others providing care for, or supporting individual children. Staff liaise closely with parents and others to ensure those children's needs are met and that they are fully supported and included within the setting. Where possible, staff link with settings to which children go on to attend such as school, helping to make the transition as easy as possible.

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

Children throughout the nursery are happy, settled and secure. They are confident, busy and provided with increasing opportunities to organise their own play. For example, in the pre-school room a trolley is provided full of creative resources, allowing children to select for themselves and use their imaginations as they play. Overall, most areas are well resourced to provide an accessible learning environment for children. Although staff are unable to provide children with opportunities to free-flow between indoor and outdoor areas due to location, they do ensure children have plenty of opportunities to decide where they want to play. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning, with children able to make choices of whether they wish to be involved. For example, as a group of younger children enjoy a group singing time, a few children who don't wish to take part play happily with another member of staff in a different area. This means that children are interested and keen to learn. Children's development is generally well planned for. Staff make regular observations of children as they play and use these

alongside their knowledge of children's interests and preferences to plan future activities to help children to take the next step. Activities are generally well organised, meaning that overall, children are achieving well.

Children's personal social and emotional development is supported well. They are encouraged to be increasingly independent as they pour their own drinks from the water dispenser if they feel thirsty. They feel confident in the familiar nursery routines, babies and younger children explore the range of textures provided in the treasure baskets demonstrating how secure they feel despite recent changes in the layout of the room. The two and three year olds happily play with the sand, as it spills over the sides of the tray it quickly becomes something they can make patterns in, introducing them to mark making. Children's individual needs and interests are always considered, valued and respected which helps to make them all feel included. For example, children who are learning English as an additional language are supported as staff try to learn key words in their own home language and also use simple sign language to aid them in communicating. Children are well behaved. Older children are often involved in developing simple rules to help create a happy environment which they all can enjoy.

Children's language and communication skills are developing well. Books and quiet areas are available throughout the nursery, encouraging children to enjoy stories and communicate with each other from an early age. There is some use of text within the areas, however, tools to encourage children to engage in mark making are not consistently provided to support and challenge older and more able children as they play. Children are confident in communicating. They share ideas as they engage in role play, enabling them to work together effectively. Children often use numbers and are becoming involved in problem solving. Younger children enjoy number rhymes and songs, developing their awareness of number order and older children use practical situations, such as counting out the cups and plates for snack time helping them to develop an understanding of number value and engage in simple calculation. Children are involved in planting and growing, they plant seeds and learn how to care for them. They build using a wide range of small and large objects, and are provided with resources such as hard hats and high visibility vests to extend the play and learning. Children are gaining skills that will help them in the future. They access electronic toys and games from an early age, recognising that one action will often produce a particular effect. For example, pre-school children confidently use computer games that require precise control of the mouse. Children throughout the nursery are regularly offered opportunities to be involved in creative activities. Babies enjoy using tools such as blocks, sponges and their own hands to make patterns.

Children are encouraged to become aware of their own health and how they can improve it. Pre-school children enjoy a 'wake and shake' activity, which helps to get them ready to learn, and all children are taught how to wash their hands thoroughly gaining skills and knowledge to support their ongoing health. Children enjoy a healthy snack during the day and a freshly prepared lunch which most of them enjoy and help themselves to more. Children frequently engage in physical activities to make them strong and increase control and co-ordination. Good use of furniture and resources in the baby room allows children to pull themselves up and stand for increasing periods of time. The two to three year olds enjoy jumping

along the hop-scotch game in the garden, gaining strength and control as they play. Children are made aware of safety. They are reminded about road safety as they go on outings and walk to the outdoor area. Staff frequently remind children about how to use tools, enabling them to operate with increasing independence whilst maintaining their own safety and that of others.

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

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