

Early Learners Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 303434
Inspection date 02/06/2011
Inspector Anne Drinkwater

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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

Early Learners Nursery Limited is privately owned and was registered in 1985. The nursery operates from a main building in the town centre of Widnes in Halton that accommodates the youngest children in two rooms on the ground floor and the school children in two rooms on the first floor. There is separate, purpose built accommodation for the pre-school children. All children have access to a secure outdoor play area situated between these two buildings.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The setting also offers before and after school care and holiday provision.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 76 children may attend the nursery at any one time all of whom may be on the Early Years Register. There are 92 children currently attending on different sessions who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The nursery also offers care to children aged over five years to 11 years. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 19 members of childcare staff which includes a qualified teacher and 17 hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children flourish in this stimulating and vibrant early years setting. The excellent knowledge of each child's individual needs ensures that staff promote all aspects of children's welfare and learning with success. Continuity of care and learning is actively promoted through the excellent partnership with parents. The use of self-evaluation is used to identify the strengths and areas for improvement within the nursery and the thorough visions of the directors. The staff constantly strive to improve the outcomes for the children attending the nursery.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- obtain information about who has legal contact with the child and who has parental responsibility (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare). 23/06/2011

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

- improve further good practise by ensuring all staff register their attendance each day
- ensure the children's learning journeys are accessible to parents at all times
- develop further the children's opportunities to promote their self help skills at meal and snacks times and to independently access drinks.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

There is a very strong emphasis on safeguarding children in the nursery. Many staff have attended safeguarding training and are clear about the procedures they would follow if they had concerns about a child. The recruitment system and comprehensive induction programme ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. The staff have a thorough understanding of creating a clean, safe and welcoming environment. Very comprehensive risk assessments are in place and cover all eventualities including the premises and individual outings. Staff also carry out daily safety checks in each room to ensure children can play and explore in a safe environment. Staff are fully aware of the fire evacuation procedures and these are practised with the children. Children learn about people that can help them as they visit the fire station and have regular visits from the dental hygienist.

Robust policies and procedures underpin the very efficient day to day running of the nursery. The vast majority of the required records and documentation is in place and methodically organised. However, the procedure for acquiring who has legal responsibility for children has not been brought forward when the policies were last reviewed and not all staff are vigilant about registering their presence each day. However, they are very clear about their roles and responsibilities and committed to continual professional development, they are enthusiastic and dedicated to ensuring children have an enjoyable time at the nursery. Play resources which include a range of natural resources are very well laid out in low level storage units and in boxes on the floor so all children including babies can independently select what they want to play with.

The excellent partnerships that have been developed with parents contribute to children's well-being at the nursery. Parents are kept abreast of current events at the nursery via newsletters and well presented notice boards. Staff make a point of discussing their child's day with them. In addition, they receive written information about activities they have enjoyed, sleep patterns, food intakes and nappy changes. Posters, photographs and written information throughout the nursery provide parents with excellent information about how the children are learning through play. Staff ensure parents know about how their children are progressing through regular open evenings where children's development is discussed and their portfolios of observations and tracking is shared. However, parents do not have free access to their child's portfolio. Feedback from parents at the inspection show that they think very highly of the staff and the care and education provided.

The directors and staff team have clear aims for the provision and are dedicated to continually improve the nursery setting for the children. For example, a recent refurbishment of the playrooms offers more space to babies and toddlers and the very creative natural outdoor play space give children further access to free flow play and the outdoors.

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

Children feel welcome as they enter an attractive child centred environment. Children are based in their own dedicated rooms which are equipped with furniture and play equipment suited to their age and stage of development. Examples of children's wonderful art work, photographs and a wealth of print adorn the walls and ceilings contributing to the exciting and stimulating atmosphere enjoyed by the children. Children demonstrate a strong sense of security in the nursery, as staff have warm and caring relationships with them. Staff are excellent role models for children, providing positive praise and encouragement which ensures they develop high self-esteem and confidence. Children behave very well because they thoroughly enjoy their time at the nursery and are constantly busy in purposeful play.

Parents are invited to settle their children into the nursery when they first start. During this time the child's key person actively seeks the parents' views about their child's needs and interests and uses this information and their own observations to help in their learning and development. New children are offered lots of attention and comfort from their key person to help them settle. Children are making good progress because staff are skilled in planning inspiring play opportunities. Staff undertake observations of children's achievements and interests and then plan experiences for every individual child. Children's learning journals provide detailed observations of what children can do, plans for their next step of learning and photographs of them enjoying activities. These are a wonderful record of the child's development and their time at the nursery.

The organisation of the rooms provides children with maximum freedom to explore and investigate the range of resources at their own pace, which they do with great enthusiasm. Staff are extremely attentive to the children and use constant spontaneous opportunities to extend their learning through questioning and conversation. All children's creativity is well promoted. Large pieces of paper are put on the floor and children relish in the freedom of feeling the texture and making marks with a variety of media. Paint brushes and water are another example of having fun as they create their pictures outdoors, Children love exploring a wide range of materials and textures available in various forms everyday, such as, the enormous caterpillar climbing the nursery walls or digging and exploring with sand and water which helps to develop their natural curiosity through their senses. Children use their imaginations very well as they pretend to cook foods in the role play area and younger children pretend to make pizza. Children listen intently to stories both in a group and on an individual basis. Children learn about living things as they grow a vast variety of fruits and vegetables in the garden or greenhouse. Children concentrate hard painting their

own pictures and talking about the colours they are using with each other. Children enjoy mark making and some more able children are able to form and recognise letters. Many children are confident in counting and recognising numbers one to nine in familiar context. Children access programmable toys, laptops and computers. Children's understanding of diversity and difference is enhanced as they do activities relating to various festivals and events, such as Divali and Easter. Children develop a very positive attitude towards being active. All children are able to use the newly developed outdoor play areas at some stage during the day. They use a wide range of equipment including slides, climbing frame with climbing walls, rockers and wheeled toys to develop their physical skills. The excellent and innovative use of bamboo tepee's, wooden logs, bricks, bark chippings and recycled sinks give ample opportunities for children to explore the grounds for insects and ensure there are surrounded by natural resources.

Babies have plenty of space to move around and choose their own play experiences. They busily explore various objects from the treasure basket and explore the textures of snacks and meals as they develop their hand and eye co-ordination with finger foods. Staff offer babies cuddles and their early communication skills are well supported through these high quality adult and child interactions. Children's rest needs are met well and babies sleep in comfort in cots in a separate quiet area with soft lighting and music.

Children's health is well promoted as staff give high priority to good hygiene practices across the setting. Younger children are helped with hand washing after nappy changing and before meals. Older children are encouraged to take control of their own personal hygiene, which sets the foundations for their growing independence in their personal care. The majority of staff hold a current first aid certificate, so minor accidents can be dealt with immediately. Children benefit from meals and snacks which are prepared on the premises. Children's dietary requirements and parents' preferences of foods for their children are taken fully into consideration. Meal times are a relaxed and pleasurable experience for children and drinking water is available at all times. Older children thoroughly enjoy helping themselves to water whenever they choose to throughout the day. However, younger children are not always given opportunities to encourage their independence as staff serve their meals and pour their water.

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	1
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

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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	1
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