

First Friends Nursery and Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY406959
Inspection date	19/07/2011
Inspector	Carys Millican
Setting address	Belle Vue Primary School, Beaver Road, CARLISLE, CA2 7PT
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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*.

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Description of the setting

First Friends Nursery is run by a voluntary, committee-managed organisation. It was registered in 2010 and operates from a purpose-built building in the grounds of Belle Vue Primary School, west of Carlisle City Centre. Children have access to the whole building, with two secure outdoor play areas available.

A maximum of 26 early years children may attend the group at any one time. There are no children aged under two years. Currently there are 51 early years children on roll. The nursery serves the local area and has strong links with the school. It operates during term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 12noon, then from 12.30pm to 3.30pm. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs five members of childcare staff who hold appropriate early years qualifications. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and three at level 3 or above. The nursery is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children's needs are effectively met through the high quality care and education provided by experienced early years practitioners within an inclusive, welcoming, interesting and stimulating learning environment where children are kept safe and secure. Children make good progress in their development because staff identify children's unique qualities and build on their individual interests to ensure activities are stimulating, interesting and, most of all, fun. Children benefit from the positive relationship developed with parents and the link established with the local primary school to ensure a smooth transition process for children into new surroundings. Documentation and records are clear and concise and ensure the smooth running of the nursery and safeguard children effectively. The self-evaluation and monitoring systems ensure the ongoing development and continuous improvement of the setting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- encourage parents to become more involved in their children's learning and how they can continue to help with this at home
- encourage links with other settings children attend in order to complement the learning taking place.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded by qualified, experienced staff who promote children's safety and welfare throughout the nursery. Robust safeguarding policies and procedures are implemented by fully-trained staff who have a good understanding of their role and responsibility should they have any concerns regarding the children in their care. Children's safety and welfare indoors, outside and during outings is promoted effectively. This is through the completion of detailed written risk assessments and daily health and safety checks. Children also learn through instruction how to keep themselves safe. They listen to staff's gentle reminders as they play and they regularly take part in fire evacuation practices. Children are cared for by suitable people who go through a rigorous recruitment procedure, induction and appraisal process. Stringent procedures are implemented to protect children when visitors are on the premises. Their details are recorded and they are supervised at all times. Staff regularly review the setting's policies and procedures to ensure the continued smooth running of the setting and to keep up-to date with any changes. All documents are meticulously maintained, for example, daily registers, accident records and children's records and parental consents.

The management and staff work very well together and all make a contribution to the self-evaluation process. They have made a number of improvements since registering in their new premises and have a clear vision for the future development of the setting. For example, they plan to continue to improve the outdoor play area by building raised beds so children can have a growing area. Systems are in place to ensure parents, carers and children are involved in the self-evaluation process. Parents are consulted through the use of questionnaires and verbal discussions on arrival and collection times. The high level of commitment made by the manager and staff demonstrates clearly how they strive to maintain their professional development and continuous improvement through self-evaluation.

The nursery is effectively organised to enable children to make choices and decisions in their play. Staff provide a warm, welcoming and inclusive environment. They ensure that an excellent variety of resources and range of activities are available. Therefore, children remain interested and stimulated. Staff are deployed effectively to challenge and support children at all times as they play. This ensures that children progress and achieve. Children gain an awareness of the cultures of others and learn to value diversity. This is promoted through the provision of resources, pictures, and planned themed activities celebrating festivals and events, for example, Chinese New Year and Diwali.

Children benefit greatly from staff working closely with parents. Parents are positively welcomed into the setting. Staff encourage their continued support and their input is highly valued. Parents are provided with a wealth of information about the setting, such as regular newsletters, and information is displayed on the noticeboard. There are good systems in place for gathering information about the children's development prior to them starting at the nursery. Parents complete 'all

about me' books containing details about children's individual needs. Staff complete daily diaries and encourage parents to add comments. They also ask parents to share this document with the other settings children attend. However, more formal links have not been established with these settings to enable the complementing of learning to take place. The recent open evening enabled staff to discuss children's progress with parents. Parents are informed by staff about forthcoming events and planned themes, however, information on how parents can help with their children's learning at home is limited. The children are well prepared for the transition from the nursery to school. Staff organise visits and share information with the school in order to ensure progression and continuity of care and learning.

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

Children are happy, confident individuals who settle easily on arrival. They know the routine and find their name card before sitting in the quiet area. The key worker system enables staff and children to form good relationships with each other. This also provides children with effective support to achieve good outcomes. Children are well supported by highly-skilled, qualified practitioners, who have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. The staff clearly explain at what stage of development their key children have reached and what they are helping children to achieve next. The observations and assessments show that children are making steady progress towards the Early Learning Goals and this is clearly recorded in their profile ready for school. Staff use children's interests to develop planning. For example, a discussion about the seaside developed into a conversation about pirates. The planning was then changed to incorporate this interest, with children creating a pirate ship from cardboard boxes and hunting for treasure outside. Children feel valued and their self-esteem and sense of belonging is fully encouraged. This is due to the staff displaying their artwork creatively around the room and constantly rewarding and praising positive behaviour and achievement.

Children are very well behaved and play well together in group activities. They learn life skills in routine activities and during play. For example, children learn to take turns and share resources whilst playing games, and at circle time learn to listen to others. Children use their imagination well. They make pirate hooks and eye patches and confidently ask staff to help put on their head scarf before going out to hunt for treasure. Children help themselves to the small world toys and construction materials. They plan, design and build houses, using bricks and creating vehicles using wheels, nuts and bolts. Mathematical opportunities, children's language and communication skills are expertly promoted in all activities. Staff use appropriate questioning techniques, thus skilfully extending their play. At snack time children calculate how many plates and cups are required and then count them as they hand them out. Children's play in a language-rich environment. They enjoy listening to stories and their love of music is incorporated in singing activities and musical storytelling.

Staff provide children with ample opportunities to access physical play and exercise in the fresh air. Children play out in all weathers. They have the freedom to access

the recently refurbished outdoor play area and equipment in safety. Children explore and investigate the natural environment and learn about living things. They look with magnifying glasses at the worms on the grass and watch in awe as they disappear into the ground. Some children balance on upturned milk crates and crawl through tunnels whilst other children competently ride trikes and scooters around the paved areas. Children learn to keep themselves safe through gentle reminders by staff and through instruction. They benefit from visit from people in the community such as the ambulance and visiting paramedics. Children's healthy living and lifestyle is well promoted. Staff support children's independence during toileting and hand-washing routines, and they encourage children to help keep the environment tidy. Children enjoy a healthy nutritious fresh fruit snack and benefit from the social interaction created whilst eating.

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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