

Small Wonders Day Care Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

EY421911

Inspection date

18/08/2011

Inspector

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Type of setting

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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

Small Wonders Day Care Nursery was registered in 2011. It is one of two privately owned settings and is situated in the Thatto Heath area of St Helens. The setting has full disabled access and facilities. Children use four nursery rooms and share access to a computer and literacy suite. There is a secure, fully enclosed outdoor play area. The provision primarily serves families living in and around the local community. The setting operates a flexible service, which means it may operate seven days per week between the times of 6.30am and 6.30pm. It is closed on bank holidays.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of 84 children under eight years at any one time, all of whom may be within the early years age range. At present, there are 22 children on roll, 19 of whom are in the early years age group. The setting provides care for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting is also registered to offer care to children aged over eight years and is registered by Ofsted on the voluntary part of the Childcare Register.

The setting employs eight staff to work with the children. Of these, seven hold relevant early years qualifications. One member of staff holds Early Years Practitioner Status and another has an Early Years Foundation Degree. Additional staff are employed for cleaning, food preparation and administration. The setting is supported by the local authority and is a member of the National Day Nursery Association.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

This is a well-organised, attractively presented setting, in which staff implement the policies and procedures efficiently to promote the children's safety and well-being. The playrooms provide a welcoming and lively learning environment and the staff plan securely to support children's learning. The effective partnerships established with parents and other services ensure that children's unique needs are known and attended to effectively. Self-evaluation is in the early stages and the management has identified areas for improvement but to date has not had sufficient time to implement such changes fully.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the opportunities for children to do things outdoors in different ways and on different scales from when indoors
- develop further the systems for self-evaluation to support continuous improvement, for example by using the Ofsted self-evaluation form as the

basis of ongoing internal review.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are very well protected as there are robust procedures in place to safeguard them. Rigorous recruitment and selection processes include the checking of adults' identity and qualifications and the completion of a full Criminal Records Bureau check before employing them to care for the children. The detailed safeguarding policies and procedures in place accurately reflect the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Up-to-date contact details are readily available, and the designated officer for safeguarding demonstrates a high level of familiarity with the procedures to be implemented. Induction and regular staff training opportunities ensure that staff are also very clear about their roles and responsibilities. They confidently and correctly explain the procedures for recording and reporting any child protection concerns, including the whistle-blowing policies.

The premises are kept clean and tidy, and the equipment is of a good quality and well maintained. Rigorous security is implemented, assisted by the use of electronic visual monitoring and entry systems. The staff complement these systems further through their efficient monitoring of the premises and equipment as they go about their daily routines. Staff conduct risk assessments and check the fire detection equipment weekly. Staff practise the evacuation procedure with sufficient frequency to help children gain an awareness of what to do in an emergency.

The setting is able to demonstrate some improvement and has drawn up an action plan. Managers are effectively using the breadth of staff's skills and experience to continue to develop a quality service for the children. A regular review of the indoor play environment is undertaken, and plans for the extensive development of the outdoor play area are enthusiastically communicated. However, little has been done to implement interim actions in the outdoor play provision, which results in limited play opportunities for the children. In contrast the playrooms are bright and inviting, with lots of low-level storage, which provides children with good independent access to developmentally appropriate toys and activities. Managers have begun to work closely with other agencies, seeking guidance and advice to improve the quality and safety for the children and staff. For example, they have recently acted on some of the suggestions by the local authority early years team regarding the organisation of the indoor play environment, and have sought advice from the Environmental Health Officer regarding the relocation of the laundry facilities. The latter improving the procedures for minimising the spread of infection and promoting a safer working environment for staff.

The setting is very welcoming and inclusive, with good quality posters, pictures and play figures forming an integral part of all areas in the setting. Staff ensure that there are books, stories and activities which allow children to learn about and explore different customs and beliefs of their own and other people's cultures. The setting provides a wealth of good quality information to engage parents. This includes a detailed information pack and displays about the staff team and the

learning and activity planning throughout the setting. A parents' room is available, which allows parents to access policies, procedures and other information about services in the wider community. The provision and systems for supporting children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, or who require additional support, are effectively implemented. A proactive approach to establishing effective links with other provisions, such as schools are confidently communicated by the setting.

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

The outcomes for children are promoted very well at this setting. Staff's enthusiasm and their warm interactions with them mean that children feel safe and secure. Consequently, they are busy and purposeful in their play. They excitedly respond to the staff's conversation, such as talking about the images in the jigsaw or as they explore the range of creative media and chinks when making their pictures. Their faces beam with delight when staff praise their efforts. Staff use daily routines well to provide learning through practical situations. For example, children learn about staying safe as staff remind them to blow on their food as it might be hot and explain the potential consequences of leaving toys where others may trip over them. Mealtimes promote the development of independence as children learn to pour their own drinks and serve their own food. Staff ensure that each child is well supported so that mealtimes provide a very pleasant social occasion for all the children. The children enjoy a range of healthy meals and snacks, such as chicken stir-fry and fruit or vegetable batons. However, less focus is placed on children's understanding of the benefits of a healthy diet and regular exercise. Children are secure and relaxed, and their own personal routines for rest are followed. Children behave very well as staff provide pleasant and polite role models and encourage children to share and take turns, for example when they throw the dice or play board games with the older children.

Staff have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how a play-based environment promotes children's learning and development, and fosters their skills for the future. The thoughtful organisation of the indoor play environment ensures that children have play experiences that span many aspects of each of the six areas of learning; for example, staff provide lots of different writing materials in the role play area. Staff undertake regular observations and use them to inform the future activity planning to support the individual children's next steps for learning. For example, they introduce activities based on a child's experience of visiting a zoo, including creating a small-world zoo and introducing stories and songs linked to the theme. A tracking matrix allows the staff to identify potential gaps in children's stages of development and learning.

Lots of communication and discussion takes place across the setting, and children enjoy regular opportunities to share a story or sing songs. Baskets of natural materials and tactile experiences of water, sand and play dough help younger children develop their exploratory nature. All children play with toys that represent technology and have access to computers. With support, they use more unusual machinery, such as the photocopier. The indoor environment is rich in print and

numerals, and staff encourage the children to count and recognise colours as they go about their play. The children have a wide range of role play and construction materials to build with. However, these types of activities have not been extended sufficiently in the outdoor areas to allow children to try to do things on a larger scale. Children enjoy some trips to the local park and library, and staff talk about the weather and seasons as part of the daily discussions, helping to extend the children's knowledge of their world and foster their curiosity and exploratory nature.

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	3
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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