

Darwen Children's Centre (Lord St Site)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY246291
Inspection date 28/11/2011
Inspector Linda Shore

Setting address Lord Street, DARWEN, Lancashire, BB3 0HD

Telephone number 01254 778900

Email

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

Darwen Children's Centre's nursery is based in a children's centre situated within the Sure Start building in the Sudell area of Darwen, Lancashire. They serve the local area and have strong links with local school and other agencies. Children have access to the sensory room, library and wider facilities of the centre. The nursery is accessible to all children and there are three fully enclosed areas available for outdoor play.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 8am until 6pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 94 children may attend the nursery at any one time 84 of whom may be on the Early Years Register. There are currently 64 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. 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 21 members of childcare staff. Of these, 19 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The manager holds an Honours degree in early years and the nursery employs a qualified teacher with Early Years Professional Status, two days per week. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children and their families are very warmly welcomed into an extremely friendly child-orientated nursery. Their care and learning needs are promoted to a consistently high standard and their welfare is assured at all times. As a result, children are making excellent progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage in relation to their starting points. The nursery shows an extremely positive attitude to providing an inclusive environment and liaises closely with parents and other providers to meet children's individual needs. Very effective self-evaluation takes account of the views of staff, parents and children to ensure priorities for development are accurately targeted.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- improving opportunities for the youngest babies to have outdoor play.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The combination of clear child protection policies and procedures with staff thorough knowledge and understanding of them, ensures children are very well safeguarded. Strong partnerships have been formed with the relevant agencies and professionals to protect children. All members of staff working with the children have been vetted and are well qualified and experienced to look after children. Thorough procedures for risk assessments are in place which minimise children being exposed to potential hazards, for example, for indoors and outdoors and when children are taken on visits. A comprehensive set of policies are in place in accordance with requirements to ensure the smooth running of the nursery and a safe and secure environment for the children.

The management team are inspirational and have a clear sense of vision for continuous improvement. They have high expectations and inspire staff in developing their knowledge and skills, reflecting on their practice to promote the best possible outcomes for each child in their care. Staff work extremely well together as a team and staff deployment is highly effective, often exceeding required adult to child ratios, ensuring that children benefit from excellent levels of support. As a result, children's achievements and well-being are exceptionally high. A long history of thorough self-evaluation processes have been implemented to reflect on their practice and identify key areas for improving the already high standard of care for children.

Very good quality resources are in place and all are displayed attractively and accessibly so all children can access them. They have genuine opportunities to make choices and decisions about what they do, supported and guided only when required, as the staff are extremely skilful at identifying when this is necessary. Adult-led activities are kept to a minimum and are very purposeful with clear learning objectives. All children make good progress as resources and appropriate support are available, as identified for each child.

Staff make sure they know each child and their family very well so they understand their particular needs and adjust the environment to provide for them. For example, some staff are able to speak with families in their own language to build good relationships with them and better understand their requirements for their children. Partnerships with parents and carers are a particular strength of the setting as they work very closely together. Information is shared on a daily basis from the beginning of a child's involvement with the nursery. Detailed information is displayed for the parents about the Early Years Foundation Stage, how it is implemented and how it relates to what the children are doing. Additional support from other areas of the children's centre and beyond are available and encouraged. For example, contact with Health Visitors, library, sensory room and speech and language therapy all contribute to children's development.

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

All children make good developmental progress in relation to their starting points in the well-organised and resourced environment. Their progress is clearly observed and recorded in individual learning journeys which are shared with their parents and carers on a regular basis. A simple but highly effective, planning process, ensures each child's development is monitored and activities are effectively planned around individual interests and level of ability. Children subsequently flourish in an environment rich with challenges incorporating all six areas of learning. Although each child has a key person with whom they build strong relationships, all staff know all the children well. This ensures children receive high levels of support and guidance and feel extremely settled and secure.

Children eagerly settle each day, greeted by the staff and their friends making them feel welcome and at home. Staff treat each child as unique individuals, know them extremely well and inspire them with their calm approach, patience and great enthusiasm. As a result, children show a strong sense of security, feel safe, develop a strong sense of belonging and are motivated to learn. Their high self-esteem is evident as they take great pride in both their work and comments from staff. For example children are very proud to choose photographs and artwork to display on the walls and in in their own learning journeys. Staff know when children do not need adult intervention and allow them to learn safely about risk taking.

Children excitedly use a selection of resources for investigation and information and communication technology to support their learning and help them develop skills for the future. They use these with confidence as they find out how things work such as interacting with the large Smart board and computer. Their communication, language and literacy are developing well and many opportunities exist for them to practise mark making and recognise letters and numbers at child height. Children begin to learn about similarity and difference amongst people and the wider world through interesting activities such as imaginary play in the area set up as a kitchen in a Muslim household to celebrate the festivity after completing the fasting month of Ramadan. They learn and reinforce problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy skills for life through well planned activities. For example children are focussed and concentrate as they learn the concept of same and different by trying to get the same number of objects into bowls and compare them. Physical activities both indoors and outdoors, such as wake and shake and ride on toys mean children are developing very well physically.

Children learn about leading healthy lives by choosing to play outside whenever they like. Regardless of the weather conditions, they dress appropriately and venture happily outside to three fully enclosed outdoor areas with a variety of surfaces and den areas for older children. Babies do not have regular access to outdoor natural resources and surfaces, however, this is partially addressed through occasional use of the excellent wild wooded area for exploration, picnics and expeditions. Healthy meals and snacks, eaten sociably together at the table, as well as routinely washing their hands, helps develop good habits for the future.

All children behave extremely well, showing care and consideration for each other and happily respond to the staff as they are spoken to with respect.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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