

The Beacon Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY363360
Inspection date	06/03/2012
Inspector	Sue Birkenhead

Setting address	YMCA Beacon, 25 College Street, St. Helens, Merseyside, WA10 1TF
Telephone number	01744 750 848
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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

The Beacon Nursery was registered in 2007. It is managed by St. Helen's YMCA and operates from the Beacon Building in walking distance of St. Helens town centre. Children use four nursery rooms and a sports hall for their care and activities. They share access to a secure, fully enclosed outdoor play area. Children attend from a wide catchment.

The nursery is registered to provide care for a maximum of 64 children aged under eight years at any one time. It is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm and is open all year round with the exception of bank holidays. There are 70 children in the early years age group on roll. Of these, 20 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and English as additional language. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The nursery employs 17 staff to work with the children, of whom, 16 have an appropriate early years qualifications. Support services are used for cleaning and general maintenance. The setting receives support from St. Helen's early years quality and inclusion team.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

The nursery provides a welcoming, inclusive environment where children's individual needs are clearly recognised; consequently children settle well and are happy, secure. The well-qualified staff team have a positive understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and overall the welfare and learning requirements are successfully met. The children's learning experiences are enjoyable and interesting, to support the good progress they make. Suitable procedures for self-evaluation are developing and include a strong commitment to the continuous improvement of the setting to promote better outcomes for children. Effective procedures ensure good relationships develop between parents, outside agencies and other settings the children attend, to ensure children's individual needs are addressed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the use of self-evaluation to assess what the setting offers as well as an evaluation of the areas for future development taking into account parents views
- improve procedures for exchanging information with parents to obtain

information regarding children's developmental starting points on entry to the setting and enable them to contribute to their child's developmental profile regularly

- improve procedures to ensure children have independent access to drinking water at all times.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding children's welfare is given high priority. Staff confidently outline the indicators of abuse, have a secure understanding of the procedures for referring concerns and all attend relevant training. Very comprehensive risk assessments are in place and the use of safety equipment ensure risks to children are effectively minimised. Robust procedures for the recruitment of staff, ongoing appraisals and regular supervision sessions ensure staff suitability, monitor performance effectively and recognise additional training needs. Documentation and the written policies underpin good practice in the main. Staff show a positive commitment to extending their knowledge and skills through additional training they attend. Systems for self-evaluation are developing and plans are in place to further involve staff and parents in this process. In addition the action plans, which target ongoing improvements well, actively support the continuous development of the setting. The previous recommendations raised at the last inspection have been addressed, which also supports their commitment to continuous development. Consequently, opportunities for parents to become more involved in the nursery, the outdoor area and provision of large resources have been increased to promote better outcomes for children.

Good relationships develop with parents through the effective ways they are involved in the nursery, which includes the sharing of information initially, regular news letters and the open door policy. The introduction of the 'family club' at the weekends encourages parents and carers into the nursery to experience activities with their children. The effective two way communication systems which include the 'home link' books ensure a consistent approach to the children's care. Written policies are accessible for parents to read and include safeguarding and complaints procedures. The information on display makes them aware of the staff team and aspects associated with the registration of the nursery. Parents can review their child's developmental profile and discuss their progress at any time. A more formal approach to enable parents to contribute in writing to their profiles is an area for future development. Initially, parents provide written information which includes the children's likes, dislikes and family details. However, children's developmental starting points are not incorporated to provide a baseline from which to monitor their ongoing progress. The provision of the book loan system and the 'proud fish' display, to which they may contribute, encourages parents to further extend their learning at home and share their observations. Parents say they are happy with the care and education their children receive. The nursery staff promote effective links with other settings children attend. They clearly welcome support as well as guidance from outside agencies when working with children who have learning difficulties, disabilities or English as an additional language.

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

Children are confident to explore the spacious, bright, welcoming environment which is rich in text and number and includes many sensory experiences. They make decisions about their play through the continuous provision and effective deployment of good quality resources. Consequently children become active learners. Their sense of belonging is effectively promoted through the attractive displays of their art work and many photographs within all the rooms. The cohesive staff team work effectively to complement the delivery of many worthwhile learning experiences. Staff interact positively and adapt activities where necessary taking into account children's differentiation in learning. As a result children have fun and are challenged in their learning. The individual weekly plans are clearly linked to the children's interests, observations and next steps in children's learning highlighted. The good balance of adult-led activities across all areas of learning complements the opportunities for child-initiated play. Key workers complete the children's profiles using consistent systems recently introduced throughout the nursery. These include detailed purposeful observations, which are linked to the areas of learning and outline their next steps as well a tracker system to monitor the good progress they make.

Children's interest in books is clearly encouraged to support the development of their early literacy skills. They select books of their choice and instigate story times. They visit the library regularly and a book loan system is available for parents to continue children's interest in books at home. Many opportunities enable children to learn about the importance of exercise on their overall well-being and to promote the development of their physical skills. For example, they can freely access the outdoor play area, build with crates, and access wheeled toys, supporting the development of balance, coordination and skills for walking. They take part in physical education sessions, dance and complete the actions to rhymes from the 'Busy Feet' programme associated with 'Healthy Matters'. Children of all ages are introduced to mark making through a variety of different experiences and older children give meaning to the marks they make. Children's understanding of number is incorporated well into all activities and everyday experiences. They use their imagination as they dress up and make meals in the home area with friends. They work together to build and design models using the large construction based on their individual interests, using their imagination well. Children develop their creativity by accessing a wide range of different media, to explore texture and design models, which include recyclable materials. They actively learn about the natural world as they go for walks and nurture and grow vegetables from seed. The positive outcomes for children ensure all activities contribute to the development of their future skills and include using cameras, interactive resources and computers efficiently therefore introducing them to technology from an early age.

Children develop their understanding of staying safe because they regularly practise emergency evacuation and wear high visibility jackets during outings. Staff develop close and supportive relationships with the children, which helps them to

feel safe. They help them to learn about road safety by organising visits from the police and fire service, to enhance their awareness of safety issues. They follow good hygiene routines and understand they need to wash their hands to get rid of 'germs'. The daily provision of nutritious meals promotes the children's understanding of healthy foods. This is endorsed through the 'St. Helen's Healthy food award' and the 'Environmental Health 5 star award'. Children develop their self-help skills as the older ones serve their own meals, set the tables and younger children learn to feed themselves. Drinking water is accessible to children throughout their stay, although due to a recent change in their approach they cannot access it independently. Children have access to a wide range of resources and activities to effectively promote their understanding of diversity and staff plan activities in recognition of cultural festivals throughout the year. Through the use of the 'word walls' and an awareness of children's home language, children's understanding of the English language is developing well. Staff provide positive role models for children, to encourage their manners and they use positive techniques for the effective management of their behaviour, which fosters the development of their self-esteem and confidence. For example, they very regularly praise children, intervene to diffuse minor conflict and allocate stickers in recognition of something they have achieved, which they can share with their parents. As a result, children behave well.

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	3
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