

# Howgill Family Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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EY284918

**Inspection date**

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**Inspector**

Andrea Paulson

**Setting address**

Birks Road, Cleator Moor, Whitehaven, Cumbria, CA25 5PT

**Telephone number**

01946 817900

**Email**

[vivienne.halliday@howgill-centre.co.uk](mailto:vivienne.halliday@howgill-centre.co.uk)

**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

Howgill Family Centre in Birks Road, Cleator Moor, Cumbria is one of three childcare settings run by Howgill Family Centre. It opened in 2004 and operates from a building previously used as a primary school. The nursery, creche and holiday play scheme operate from rooms within the building known as Croasdale and Kinniside. There are two outdoor areas, one at the back of the premises and one adjacent to the nursery at the side. The holiday scheme does not operate when the creche is in session.

The centre serves the local and surrounding areas. The centre is registered on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of 66 children at any one time. There are currently 17 children aged from two to three years on roll.

The nursery currently opens during the school term on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 9am to 11.30am and Thursday 12.30pm to 3pm, with full day care provided as needed. The summer holiday play scheme opens when required Monday to Friday 8.30am to 7.30pm. The short breaks scheme supports children up to 16 years of age. There is also a parent and toddler group and a crche for parent training. The centre supports children with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are four regular staff members, all of whom have appropriate early years qualifications to level 3 or 4. The centre receives support from the local authority and provides funded early education.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress as they actively participate in this inclusive, welcoming and mostly imaginative centre. Children's individual needs are met well through high levels of staff interaction and health and safety is promoted effectively through consistent practices. Planning for children's learning is comprehensive and well-presented. Partnerships with parents, carers and the community are strong. Significant improvements have been made since the last inspection. Self-evaluation is generally effective and identifies further areas for development so demonstrating good capacity for continuous improvement.

## What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further the self-evaluation systems to take into account the views of parents, carers, children and staff in order to improve the quality of provision for children

- develop the outdoor area to provide a more challenging space for children.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Strong, supportive leadership along with knowledgeable staff ensure that children are well safeguarded. The vetting procedures are securely followed to check that all adults working with children are suitable to do so. Staff are highly aware of their responsibility to keep children safe as they implement secure procedures, for instance, when children are collected. Self-evaluation results in significant improvements, which enhance the provision so that children achieve well. Examples of this include the development of photographic journals for each child and new furniture to improve the accessibility and quality of resources. However, systems for self-evaluation do not sufficiently involve staff, children, parents and carers. The conscientious and hard-working staff are well organised in planning challenging activities for each child. They work closely as a team and support children well in all the play areas, which maximises children's learning opportunities. Children benefit from being cared for by staff who receive regular training so that they are well informed about current good childcare practices.

Indoors, the wide range of resources is managed well to create a homely learning environment. Many of the colourful displays are created by the children. The emphasis is to create a settled environment where each child feels valued and confident to explore resources familiar to them and which build on their interests. Children also have exclusive access to the outdoor play area, which is adjacent to the nursery room. Although plans are in place to make major improvements to the outdoor area, it currently lacks sufficient stimulation for children to explore, use their senses and be physically active and exuberant.

The staff are pro-active in establishing partnerships with others involved with the children through several means of two-way communication. The reception area is full of useful information about the centre. Parents and carers are also welcomed into the centre and chat informally with staff. They are regularly informed of their child's progress. The centre works closely with parents and carers to further support each child's continuity of care and learning. Parents and carers speak highly of the staff and the good quality provision. They comment on how happy the children are, how caring the staff are and how well their children are learning to socialise. The flexible settling-in procedure was particularly appreciated in being adapted to meet the needs of individual children. The centre has built up an active partnership with the nursery school, which promotes children's smooth transition towards full-time education. Links with the community are strong, including the provision of a toddler group and crche for local families.

Comprehensive and inclusive policies and procedures support the consistent practices which are implemented well. Children's unique qualities are acknowledged and valued with staff providing sensitive individual care. Staff members take pride in their work and make a strong team, which effectively supports individual play and learning.

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

Children's learning and development are promoted well through secure staff knowledge and effective planning which ensure good progress for each child. Observations are used well to plan the next steps and are closely linked to all the areas of learning. Staff members are committed to providing each child with stimulating experiences so that they enjoy and achieve well. Children benefit from a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities so that they grow in confidence and become more independent. The effective interaction of staff extends their learning during spontaneous play. For example, children explore how boats in the water tray float and sink and they choose square and rectangular shapes of toast during snack time. This supports their mathematical development.

They compare colours, count the number of ducks and work out how many more dinosaur shapes to make out of modelling dough. Children experiment when using a sloping log to make a ramp to roll toy cars down. They learn how to compare sizes through the Goldilocks topic. Children's communication skills are well promoted. They settle very well as they keenly listen to stories. Children are encouraged to express their ideas, such as spontaneously painting a picture to reflect the story and by using puppets for an action song. They learn about letter patterns and rhymes as they sing songs and begin to recognise letters and simple words, such as their name and labels. New words, such as croissants, are introduced to further extend their vocabulary. Children enjoy activities that help develop pre-writing skills such as making models and using stencils. In this way, their confidence and skills for the future are developing well.

Staff care very much about the children's well-being. They develop children's awareness of the importance of good health and physical activity. For example, children are learning to keep themselves healthy as they discuss which foods are good for them. They learn to spread the butter on their toast by themselves and choose manageable pieces of fruit. The importance of healthy food is reinforced as they make pizzas and fruit kebabs. Children learn to keep themselves well and demonstrate good personal hygiene when washing their hands. They enjoy regular outdoor play and learn that fresh air and daylight help them grow strong. Children keep well as they put on their coats to keep warm and know to drink water when they are thirsty. They learn how to keep themselves and others safe through good behaviour and careful practices. Well resourced activities provide children with good opportunities to develop their awareness of their own environment and the wider world. Children learn about the natural world as they use a magnifying glass to study a butterfly and when they visit a farm.

Children's social skills, such as sharing and taking turns, are promoted particularly well. As a result, children play harmoniously. Good standards of behaviour are evident within the centre as children follow the good role models of staff. The warmth and friendliness of staff help children to feel valued. Consequently, they grow in confidence and have good self-esteem. Children often express much joy in their achievements and interact confidently with staff and other children. Overall,

children make good progress and enjoy their time in the colourful, well-organised and welcoming centre.

## 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

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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