

Children 1st

Inspection report for early years provision

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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

Children 1st Nursery registered in 2011, but has been established since 1991. It operates from five main rooms, in a two storey building, in Meir Park, Stoke on Trent. Children access the upper floors via a wide staircase and have easy access to an enclosed, all-weather outdoor play area. The setting provides care for children from birth to five years of age. A maximum of 87 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 120 children on roll who attend on a full or part-time basis. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. The setting is open five days a week from 7.15am until 5.45pm all year round. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. There are 28 members of staff who work with the children. All hold a National Vocational Qualification at level 3.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Staff provide a welcoming and highly inclusive environment for the children and families that attend. Children flourish and make excellent progress in their learning and development in an exciting and stimulating environment. Staff know the children extremely well and have an excellent understanding of their individual needs and a strong commitment to meeting them. As a result, they provide an exemplary range of activities and resources that excite and engage the children in learning across all areas. Children are consulted and their views are taken into consideration and acted upon so that they have a sense of ownership within the setting. Managers and staff are passionate about the development of the nursery and along with strong partnerships with parents; they use self-evaluation generally well to continuously improve the provision and the outcomes for the children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- developing further the self-evaluation process to provide the setting with an accurate appraisal of its effectiveness and what it needs to do in order to secure further improvements.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are protected and effectively safeguarded through robust safeguarding measures, comprehensive policies and rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures. Staff have a very clear knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures and their knowledge is kept up-to-date through training and professional development diaries. High staff ratios and effective deployment ensures that children are very well supervised and feel secure.

Strong leadership and close monitoring of the quality of the provision motivates the team who are highly qualified, experienced and fully committed to providing outstanding outcomes for children. The organisation and planning for continuous improvement is exemplary. The management team have high aspirations for excellent quality childcare and there is a very clear vision for developing the setting which is shared by all, including parents. For example, the setting holds parent partnership meetings where parents contribute their ideas. Staff meetings and regular training are used to quickly embed new systems that are put in place to enhance the provision. This is highly effective; however, the current self-evaluation of the setting underestimates its strengths.

Transition arrangements for children moving throughout the nursery and on to school are exceptionally well planned. Staff move with the children into new rooms as they progress and visit school with the children to ensure continuity of learning and care. Equality and diversity is at the heart of the setting and staff are exemplary at meeting the individual needs of the children. This is supported by the wide range of high quality resources and equipment that is used imaginatively. Children make choices as they self-select easily accessible equipment and, as a result, children are confident, independent learners. There is a strong emphasis on ensuring that all practice is inclusive for all families through strategies, such as easily-accessible recordings of nursery rhymes for families with English as an additional language.

Partnerships with parents and carers are excellent and support children extremely well. They have access to a wide range of information and staff have a good knowledge of where to signpost them for additional support. Parents and carers speak very positively about what the nursery has to offer their children. Parents are invited to contribute to their child's learning and development as they help with baseline assessments when their child starts nursery. They continually pass on information to the staff, with daily access to their files. Close links with other professionals and multi-agency meetings ensure that everyone is working consistently to provide optimum support for the children.

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

Children are thoroughly engaged in their play from the moment they enter the nursery and staff are very well deployed to support children. They have superb opportunities to be active and make choices in their learning, throughout all rooms and outdoors. Staff make learning fun as they are highly motivated and enthusiastically engage with the children extending their vocabulary and thinking skills. The setting draws on the outstanding skills of the Early Years Practitioner, who is part of the senior management team, and staff actively promote healthy lifestyles as children have regular access to fresh air and exercise. All snacks are freshly prepared and children independently serve themselves and know to wash their hands before sitting down to eat. Children confidently talk about how we need water to think and biscuits for energy, while developing skills for the future in the children's council meeting. Staff develop children's knowledge of the world around them through sustained shared thinking and allowing them to take the lead in their own learning. If children are tired or unwell this is recognised immediately and they are comforted. Staff passion ensures excellent care and education for the children is consistent.

The setting has strong links with the community as children visit the local community centre to sing songs to older people and make banners for the jubilee party at the local church. Preschool children have an excellent knowledge of how to stay safe and speak with assurance about the fire-evacuation procedure in nursery. They benefit from a visit from the fire service centred on keeping safe using 'Stop, Drop, Roll,' procedures and when exploring the fire engine children squeal with delight when pretending to extinguish a fire with the hose. Learning is fun and children show high levels of enjoyment and are extremely happy. The key strength is the all-weather, continuous provision that ensures all children access a wide variety of resources both indoors and out.

Babies are reassured and nurtured extremely well by sensitive, caring staff. They investigate their environment with determination and pleasure as toys and natural resources are easily accessible. Babies sensory development is highly stimulated as they use an interesting area with flashing lights and they enjoy exploring natural resources. Staff understand the benefits babies get from fresh air particularly well and encourage sleeping in prams outdoors.

Staff are confident and have a very clear understanding of planning and assessment, which is highly effective. Staff observe the children continually and use their professional notes to identify children's interests and next steps in each child's development. For example, preschool children thoroughly enjoy a theme on people who help us following on from a parent, who is a vet, coming to visit the setting. Next steps are effectively used to inform future plans and individual targets for children; as a result, children make excellent progress.

Children's behaviour is exemplary as staff use effective behaviour management techniques, such as singing 'if you're happy and you know it, make a line' encouraging children to line up readily to go inside. Children happily share toys

and take turns in play.

The commitment to first-hand experiences and a vibrant outdoor area with a rich and stimulating range of equipment means the children are enthusiastic and purposefully engaged. For example, children thoroughly enjoy going on a mini-beast hunt and count the spots on a ladybird they find. Other children excitedly recall what happened when the vet visited and showed an x-ray of a cat that had broken its leg. Children have access to excellent resources which promote skills in communication, language and literacy. There is an extensive selection of books throughout the setting and children take great pleasure in reading them and helping to finish the sentences in stories that rhyme. Children confidently use phonics to spell out their own and their friends' names and they are encouraged to make marks from an early age through activities, such as playing in corn flour and water.

Children have access to computers and listening centres to develop their understanding of technology and younger children learn that pushing buttons creates further actions. Preschool children learn to look after living things as they grow vegetables inside which they then plant in their vegetable patch in the garden. They also enjoy trips in the minibus to the local park to play on more challenging equipment and grassed areas. Staff interaction supports children to initiate their own learning and develop skills for the future extremely 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?	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

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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