

The Owls Nursery

Manchester Road, Blackrod, BOLTON, BL6 5SN

Inspection date	29/04/2013
Previous inspection date	12/07/2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children are enthusiastic and motivated to learn. They show high levels of curiosity and play harmoniously with their peers.
- Experienced staff have a secure understanding about how children learn. They plan stimulating activities in line with children's interests, so they make good progress towards the early learning goals.
- The highly successful implementation of the key person system ensures that all children form secure emotional attachments. As a result, children learn more effectively.
- Children are very independent and take responsibility for their own learning from an early age, so that they are very prepared for their move in to school.
- Leadership is strong and all staff feel welcome and valued. As a result, staff are conscientious and strive to provide a good quality service.

It is not yet outstanding because

- The monitoring of detailed assessments is not always consistent and so assessments are sometimes incomplete. This makes it difficult for staff to have an accurate understanding of all children's rapidly developing skills, abilities and progress.
- Staff have not fully explored a range of other methods to involve parents and carers in their child's learning, in order for children to progress to towards excellence.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in all of the rooms and in the outside area.
The inspector checked evidence of suitability of staff working with the children and
- looked at induction and staff training procedures. The inspector also looked at safeguarding procedures, policies and children's records.
- The inspector spoke to the owners, manager and staff in the nursery.
- The inspector looked through children's assessment records and planning documentation and discussed these with staff.
- The inspector took account of the views of children and two parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Emily Wheeldon

Full Report

Information about the setting

The Owls Nursery was registered in 2012 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a purpose built premises in the Blackrod area of Bolton and is privately owned. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from a converted church school building and there are two enclosed areas available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 17 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, including three with honours degrees in early years.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round, except for Christmas week. Sessions are from 8am to 6pm. There is also a pre-bookable breakfast club, which operates from 7am. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 95 children in the early years age group, who are attending the nursery. There are 11 children in the early years age group, who attend the breakfast club. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery receives support from the local authority and is a member of the National Day Nursery Association.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- improve systems for monitoring assessments to ensure they are always consistent, precise and display an accurate understanding of all children's skills, abilities and progress

- develop further existing strong partnerships with parents and carers by involving them more in the observation, assessment and planning cycle and ensuring parents have regular opportunities to add to their child's learning and development record.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

All children are engaged and motivated to learn. This is because skilled staff have a good knowledge of children's interests and tailor planning to meet their needs. Staff track children's progress on tracker sheets, which are completed every three months and shared with parents. They also complete observation summaries once a month, so parents get a good overview of how their child is performing in each of the areas of learning. However,

assessment is not always effectively monitored and as a result, assessments are not always up to date. This means that staff, sometimes, do not have a very accurate picture of children's learning and development at a given point in time. Staff have high expectations and are truly passionate about working with young children. Their enthusiasm and strong engagement with children is apparent. Positive partnerships with parents are established from the beginning when children are adjusting to transitions between home and the nursery. Staff work closely with parents and find out about their child's interests and needs. Parents can look through their child's learning record at anytime and can talk to staff at the end of the session. However, systems to involve parents more in the observation and planning process and to add to children's records are not fully developed. As a result, opportunities to extend children's very good learning even further are sometimes missed.

Observations are thorough, linked to areas of learning and stages of development, with children's next steps in their learning clearly identified. As a result, children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Educational programmes are well covered across the seven areas of learning and meet the age and stages of all children as appropriate. Strong emphasis is put on developing effective communication and language skills from a very early age. For example, babies are encouraged to communicate by babbling sounds, giving eye contact and smiling. They delight in exploring different materials, such as wooden shapes with their hands and mouths. They demonstrate effective physical skills and independence skills by crawling and pulling themselves up to sit. Staff understand the importance of having good quality interactions with babies and children. For example, they play peek-a-boo games with babies behind see-through curtains and babies chuckle and wiggle their arms with excitement. Toddlers are encouraged to engage in role play and love to talk to their teddy bears and feed them some dinner.

Children's early reading and writing skills are developing well. Staff encourage toddlers and pre-school children to recognise and write their names in preparation for school. Pre-school children take reading books home each week and are taught letters and sounds by experienced staff. For example, staff reinforce children's knowledge about letters and sounds through interactive games at carpet time. Staff say, for instance, 'Put your hand up if your name begins with L?' Teaching of letter sounds is effective as all children listen to the sound 'L' and then do the action that goes with it. They demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the letters of the alphabet. Writing skills are practised from an early age. For example, small babies enjoy making marks with large pens and toddlers use their fingers to create lines and circles in shaving foam. Pre-school children develop excellent writing skills as they are encouraged to write for different purposes, such as writing a prescription in the veterinary surgery. Children with English as an additional language are well supported by resources and key words to help them to settle and feel included.

Teaching is strong and pre-school children are encouraged to work out problems by themselves. For example, they count pieces of fruit and are asked to find out what one more or one less would be. Mathematical concepts are rehearsed at every opportunity and included in routines, such as lunch time. For instance, toddlers are asked to count the number of cups on the table or sort the colours of coloured plates they see. Staff have a secure understanding of the way children learn and are successful at moving them

forward in their learning. For example, when babies are excited about playing with hair curlers and putting them in their hair, staff know that they must enhance resources. In other words, staff make sure that they provide a wide range of hair accessories for babies to explore. This means that children are highly motivated to learn because the activities provided are in line with their interests.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children are exceptionally well cared for in this highly nurturing and welcoming nursery. With a very effective key person system firmly embedded, children form very close bonds with staff and have their needs superbly met. Particularly noteworthy, is the care provided for babies, which is excellent. Caring staff work closely with parents to find out about their child's interests and needs. They also mirror the same care routines, so continuity of care is highly effective. Parents feel reassured that their children are being well looked after and say the nursery is like a 'home from home'. Interactions between key persons and babies are superb. Babies are very alert and clearly love their time in the nursery. For instance, babies are highly motivated and share a giggle with staff when they hand them hair curlers to put in their hair. They are enthralled and voluntarily offer their hands out to their key person, waiting for the hair curler to be passed back to them. This demonstrates that staff are expert at developing close bonds with children, which are based on mutual trust and putting children at ease. As a result, all children, including babies settle very quickly and are very content, which is conducive to effective learning.

Transitions within the nursery are carefully organised in advance, so information, such as assessment records, are passed onto the next key person. Parents are involved in all transitional periods, at the beginning, within the nursery and when children start school. Teachers are invited to meet the children and their key workers prior to children starting school and links are very strong. This ensures children's needs are very effectively met and continuity of care is excellent.

The environment both indoors and outside is highly stimulating. It is well thought out and flexible to meet the different ages and stages of development of children. High regard is also given to providing excellent quality resources, which are open-ended, so can be used in different ways. Staff apply their secure knowledge about child development into the planning of areas to meet children's individual needs. For example, in the baby room, the environment is very homely and warm and is equipped with soft furnishings and a sofa. The resources are very accessible and well maintained, so the babies can make choices in their play. Babies can wriggle and crawl, reach out for objects with their hands and explore their surroundings independently. For example, they pick up jigsaw pieces between their fingers and put them on an inset board or select objects from treasure baskets. The highly stimulating black and white area is used effectively to stimulate babies' vision and gain their attention to promote visual development. Pre-school children enjoy playing in an environment, which supports children's literacy, numeracy, and technological skills extremely well. For example, the role play area is rich in print where children can learn about words. There are different types of print in the form of labels and instructions and key words, so children learn to recognise letters and sounds at an early age. This means that children are well prepared for school.

All children are encouraged to be independent from an early age. Babies reach out for objects and make choices in their play and toddlers are encouraged to mount stairs by themselves. Pre-school children register themselves in the mornings and pour their own drinks when thirsty. Children behave exceptionally well because staff are meeting their needs and interests. At all times, staff ensure that they are positive role models to children. They regularly praise them, which makes them feel proud. For example, staff clap their hands and say, 'Clever boy. Well done.' to babies when they take their first steps. All staff consistently give the highest priority to the safety of children and effectively support them in their understanding of keeping themselves safe. For example, staff give gentle reminders to children about running in the pre-school room and children say, 'We might fall over if we run.'

Children are very secure in their understanding of healthy practices. They are familiar with routines, such as washing hands before eating and brushing their teeth after meals. High regard is given to promoting good oral hygiene and children recently enjoyed learning about the benefits of brushing teeth by watching a puppet show delivered by an external company. Children choose from a wide range of healthy food options, such as fresh fruit, and have access to fresh drinking water at all times. They greatly benefit from fresh air and daily exercise in an inspirational outside area. With a vast range of resources and equipment on offer, children can develop effective physical skills, such as, running, climbing, hopping, skipping and balancing. All staff follow stringent procedures to keep children healthy. For example, they wear plastic aprons and gloves during nappy changing times. Care routines are considered important times for staff to bond with children. For example, babies are sung to as they have their nappies changed.

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

Arrangements for safeguarding children within the provision are good. The inspection took place following notification of an incident relating to a child leaving the nursery with adults, who were not parents of the child. Although, staff thought the adults looked familiar, they did not challenge the adults to check they were authorised by the child's parents to collect the child. The inspection found that the staff were fully aware of their responsibilities and took all the necessary steps to prevent such an incident from ever happening again. The owners and management team carried out a full investigation of the incident and put in place additional arrangements to safeguard children. For example, all main doors are now fitted with security codes which are controlled by staff. Safeguarding is effective as all visitors are asked to sign in and show a form of identification. This ensures only authorised persons are allowed on the premises. If visitors are collecting children and are new to the nursery, staff ask them for a password and check the description of the person. All staff are vigilant and ensure they have information about who is collecting children at the end of the day. For example, they have a signing in sheet, which is completed by parents and clearly states, who will be picking their child up. Only qualified members of staff man the main doors and there is a holding area in the main entrance, so children are well protected from unauthorised persons from entering the building.

All staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of safeguarding policies and procedures. They know the signs and symptoms of abuse and know who to contact should they be concerned about a child. Comprehensive risk assessment checks are in place to ensure the premises are safe for children at all times. Procedures for vetting staff, recruitment, induction and staff's ongoing suitability to work with children are good. Effective systems are in place to monitor staff performance formally through supervisions and appraisals, as well as informally through peer observations of practice. Managers are vigilant and complete good records of their observations of staff and children, so children are safeguarded well. Any practice which managers consider need discussing with staff, are professionally dealt with and actions are implemented well.

The owners have high aspirations for the nursery and are passionate to deliver good quality childcare for families. Staff have been through a number of changes, including the recent change in manager, who is acting up in the interim. A new manager is due to start soon. Staff are well supported and any changes in terms of staffing or provision are carefully organised to ensure continuity of care is effective. The staff team are well qualified and experienced and feel valued. They are motivated to gain higher qualifications and training, which benefits the children. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and areas of responsibility are evenly spread to ensure the smooth running of the nursery. For example, the manager supports staff and oversees the quality of planning and assessment. The monitoring of educational programmes is good and ensures children receive a broad and balanced curriculum. This is because weekly planning sheets clearly show activities are linked to the seven areas of learning.

Staff have a realistic view of the nursery and know where their areas of strength and development lie. For example, through taking into account the views of staff, parents, children and outside agencies, staff have identified safeguarding and planning as key areas to develop. The nursery has swiftly met previous recommendations raised in the last inspection, such as ensuring staff to child ratios are met. The nursery does meet the ratio requirements as laid down in the welfare requirements in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Partnerships with parents and outside agencies are strong and effectively contribute to children making good progress towards the early learning goals. They know who to contact if they have any concerns and are very committed to establishing strong links with other professionals.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are **Met**

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY436980
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	911839
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	100
Number of children on roll	95
Name of provider	The Owl's Nursery Limited
Date of previous inspection	12/07/2012
Telephone number	01942832820

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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