

Highwoods Early Years Centre

Highwoods Road, Mexborough, South Yorkshire, S64 9ES

Inspection date	04/07/2013
Previous inspection date	01/02/2011

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		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- The children are happy, they behave well and approach their play with enthusiasm. Practitioners support their progress well, especially in regard to their communication and language skills. This is because they accurately assess, observe and monitor children's progress.
- Positive relationships with the children and key person arrangements means that children feel safe, settled and secure in the provision. Practitioners encourage children to take safe risks in their play so that they learn about their own safety.
- Practitioners' commitment to improving the provision for children and their professional development is sound. They manage this through self-evaluation, training and monitoring to promote positive change for children.

It is not yet good because

- Ways to encourage parents to share information about their child's abilities and progress during initial assessments are not maximised to fully enhance the transition from home.
- Large group activities during registration are not always challenging and engaging for younger children. Therefore, maintaining their interest through enjoyable experiences is not always maximised.

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 toured the premises and observed children playing indoors and outdoors.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the manager, and spoke with the manager, practitioners and a committee representative at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector looked at children's learning records, planning documents, self-evaluation, evidence of suitability of practitioners and a range of other documentation, policies and procedures.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through discussions and documentation.

Inspector

Helen Blackburn

Full Report

Information about the setting

Highwoods Early Years Centre was registered in 1992 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in Mexborough, Doncaster and is managed by a voluntary committee. The provision serves the local and wider community and is accessible to all children. It operates from a dedicated classroom in the grounds of Highwoods Primary School. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The provision employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one is qualified to level 5.

The provision opens Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 9am until 12pm and from 12.30pm until 3.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 44 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The provision currently offers care to children from two years to five years. They provide funded early education for two-, three- and four year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The provision is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- develop further relationships with parents by encouraging them to share more detail of their child's starting points to support the transition from home

- improve planning so that large group activities at the start of the session are interesting and enjoyable for the younger children and engage them.

Inspection judgements

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

Practitioners working directly with the children have a good understanding of how young children learn and develop. They provide a well-resourced learning environment both indoors and outdoors. The children can move freely between the two spaces and access a varied selection of resources across all areas of learning. This promotes children's independence as they make their own choices in play. Practitioners interact well with children and because they are actively involved in their play they support children's

progression. They skilfully use open questions to encourage children to think for themselves and they listen to their ideas when planning activities. For example, when children excitedly talk about their forthcoming holidays, practitioners build on this by providing a travel agent's office in the role-play area. This means children are motivated and enthusiastic learners who are engaged in their play because their ideas influence the planning.

Practitioners regularly observe and assess children's progress, which means they have an accurate understanding of each child's abilities, likes and needs across all areas of learning. They use this information well to plan a varied range of experiences to support children's next steps. Through their observations and tracking of children's progress they quickly identify any concerns regarding progress and put in place intervention strategies to ensure children receive the additional help they need. For example, they recognise that many children need support with their language and communication skills. They work closely with parents, external agencies and use information from 'Every Child a Talker' training to plan activities to support children's progression in this area. They regularly send home ideas and resources so that parents can continue to encourage language progression within the home. As a result, practitioners are narrowing the gap in children's learning given their starting points in language and communication. In addition, practitioners' positive interactions with children, introducing new words and providing a running commentary, encourage young children to extend their vocabulary. Older children are confident speakers; they ask questions and engage easily in conversations, such as describing the jelly, saying it is 'slippy and sticky'. Children enjoy books; they listen attentively to stories, they talk about what they see and predict their own endings. Furthermore, some more able children can read books and practitioners facilitate this by providing reading material that challenges them. Children are eager to write for different purposes, such as keeping a tally of the score in their bat and ball game and making lists in the role-play area. This supports children's early literacy development well.

Through songs, rhymes, jigsaws and games, practitioners introduce children to number and other mathematical concepts. For example, during role play in the builder's yard children measure their blocks of wood and in the water they talk about 'empty' and 'full'. During large group activities, for example, when all children arrive and registration is taking place, practitioners sometimes engage children in number activities. For example, children find different numbers and do simple calculations, such as adding one more and one less. However, although the older children enjoy these activities, the younger children who are also present, are sometimes less interested and engaged. Therefore, when planning group activities at registration time, practitioners are not always considering all children's needs and abilities, resulting in younger children not always participating as well as possible. Practitioners provide good opportunities for children to explore different media and textures, such as dough, sand, water, jelly, pasta, pebbles, ribbons, shells and paint. This promotes children's physical development and senses as they use their hands and different tools to handle, squeeze, prod, cut, roll and manipulate different objects. Children are imaginative and creative learners and this fosters their development in expressive arts and design. Children engage in role play, for example, outdoors they enjoy building, designing and creating their own models in the builder's yard and workshop. In addition, through painting, sticking and music they express their creativity, ideas and thoughts.

The children are learning well about the world in which they live. For example, children go on nature walks around the school grounds and many people from the community visit the provision, such as road safety officers, police officers and fire department officers. Posters, activities and resources help children to learn about different cultural events and festivals and about different people who live in society. Children enjoy planting, growing and harvesting the food they have grown and cared for in the garden, and this helps them learn about nature and the natural world. Through a number of activities, children are supported well in becoming independent learners. Children make their own choices in play and through planning for children's next steps, practitioners support them in making good progress in their learning.

Practitioners fully understand the importance of involving parents in their child's learning. Parents receive good information about the provision and education through a parent prospectus. They have free access to their child's progress record, an 'individual play plan' and a 'learning story'. These include information on children's progress and the types of things they are talking about when playing at the provision. Parents can share what children are doing at home through discussions and 'post-it notes', which practitioners use when planning for children's progression. This promotes continuity in children's learning. Practitioners work well with parents if there are significant emerging concerns or if children have identified special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, they regularly share information, discuss progress and devise clear targeted plans so that individual learning is tailored to each child's specific needs.

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

Practitioners gather some detailed information from parents when children start at the provision. They do this in a variety of ways, such as seeking written information about initial assessments, through discussions and settling-in visits. Practitioners use an 'all about me' booklet to gather some of this information; this pays particular attention to children's care needs, such as likes, routines, health and medical needs. During these initial assessments, practitioners are not always taking full advantage of the information parents can offer about their child's starting points in relation to their abilities and progress. Therefore, practitioners are not always fully informed about all aspects of children's care and learning when settling them and securing the transition from home.

All children work closely with their key person and this means they build up strong bonds, attachments and positive relationships with them. This means children are happy, feel safe and settled at the provision. Practitioners provide a welcoming environment for children. They display children's work and photographs around the room so that they have a sense of belonging. Practitioners are positive role models for children and they provide consistent routines and boundaries for them. For example, they make good use of praise to show children they are pleased with them and what they have achieved. This results in children behaving well for their ages and promotes their self-esteem and confidence. Through play and gentle reminders children learn about the importance of being kind, sharing and taking turns. For example, practitioners calmly intervene when needed and explain to children that it is not very kind taking toys from their friends without asking.

This encourages children to have cooperative and harmonious relationships with their peers. In addition, practitioners work closely with parents and external agencies when they have concerns about children's behaviour so that consistent strategies can be put in place. This supports children's personal, social and emotional development.

Practitioners provide a safe and clean learning environment for children. For example, through their detailed risk assessments, daily safety checks and close supervision of children, they put in place good safety precautions to minimise hazards. Through play and routines, children are developing a secure understanding of how they can keep themselves safe. For example, when playing in the workshop, children know how to handle the 'real tools', such as a children's saw, hammers and nails. This is because practitioners provide risky play in a safe and controlled environment. Practitioners implement a wide range of policies and procedures that contribute to promoting children's health. For example, through cleaning routines and management of illness, they minimise the risk of infection. They provide varied and nutritious snacks for children and this encourages them to make healthy choices. In addition, children grow and plant food in the garden that they enjoy eating at snack time, such as strawberries. Through walks and free access to the outdoor area, children have ample opportunities to access fresh air and to be active. This encourages them to lead a healthy lifestyle. For example, children climb, balance, ride bikes, enjoy playing bat and ball and practise their throwing skills by aiming different items at the target. Through everyday routines, such as hand washing before snacks, practitioners are helping children to learn about the importance of good hygiene practices.

Practitioners prepare children well for their next stage in learning, such as starting school. This includes taking children on visits to school to meet different people, such as the head teacher, caretaker and lunchtime supervisors. Children have a book with photographs of school and adults they will come across so that they can talk about their fears, what to expect and excitement as they embark on their next stage in learning.

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

Practitioners working directly with the children understand their responsibilities in meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. They all access safeguarding training, which means they have a sound understanding of the potential signs of abuse and neglect. This contributes to protecting children from harm. In addition, the provision has a detailed safeguarding policy to ensure practitioners understand the procedures for reporting concerns. Practitioners implement this and they are proactive in sharing any concerns about children in their care with appropriate agencies. This inspection took place following a notification by an external agency in regard to a safeguarding matter. The registered person (committee) worked closely with the appropriate agencies during the investigation and, as a result, children were safe and protected from harm. The inspection found practitioners were suitable to work with children and appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures support this. Practitioners working directly with the children are aware of notifying Ofsted of significant events. However, the registered person failed to notify Ofsted in relation to this

safeguarding issue, without reasonable excuse within 14 days. This is an offence, although the impact on children was minimal it demonstrates a lack of understanding of requirements which has affected the overall grade for this inspection.

The provision maintains a wide range of detailed documentation, policies and procedures. Practitioners are aware of these through their induction and this contributes to keeping children safe, such as managing illness and dealing with accidents. In addition, documentation includes evidence of suitable checks on practitioners, detailed risk assessments and appropriate information regarding children's individual details. Through sound deployment of practitioners and high adult to child ratios, children are supervised well in their play. This contributes to keeping children safe.

Through reflective practice, regular staff meetings, self-evaluation and working closely with the local authority, the provision is proactive in bringing about positive change for children. For example, through monitoring their planning and children's progress records they quickly identify any gaps in children's learning and resources. Practitioners' commitment to improve the provision for children is identified through their action plans, which includes targeted plans about how they will achieve their goals and ambitions. As a result, improvements for children are positive. Practitioners access a varied range of training to support their professional development. In addition, through peer observations, supervision and appraisals, the management team support their personal effectiveness. Practitioners welcome the views of children and parents and they seek feedback through questionnaires, discussions and through their observations of the children.

Practitioners have positive relationships with parents and, overall, they work together to support children's progression. Written information demonstrates parents are happy with the care their children receive. Practitioners work well with other professionals and agencies involved in children's learning and care. For example, they have strong links with the school, health professionals and local children's centre. Practitioners have regular discussions with any other professionals involved in children's learning and they work together to set clear goals and targets to support all children. This means they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to progress well, given their starting points.

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	318094
Local authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	925388
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	46
Number of children on roll	44
Name of provider	Highwood's Early Years Centre Committee
Date of previous inspection	01/02/2011
Telephone number	01709 587327

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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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