

High Bank Nursery

Cleasby Road, Stapleton, Darlington, County Durham, DL2 2QE

Inspection date	10/09/2013
Previous inspection date	10/06/2010

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		2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children take part in a good range of stimulating activities that are tailored to meet their individual learning needs. This is because staff have a sound knowledge of children's interests. As a result, children make good progress in their learning and development.
- Children are happy and enjoy attending the nursery. They settle well and follow a familiar routine. This helps children to form secure attachments with practitioners and develop a sense of belonging.
- Positive partnerships with parents ensure that children receive good, consistent care in a nursery that welcomes and actively encourages parental involvement in their children's learning.
- The drive for continuous improvement is good and this is reflected in the recent improvements to the outside area, which has had a significant impact on children health and well-being.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Opportunities for children to develop their literacy and numeracy skills outdoors are not as effective as indoors, as there are fewer displays of letters, signs and numbers.
- There is further scope to extend the range of open-ended and reclaimed materials outdoors.

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 throughout the nursery in both indoor and outdoor spaces.
- The inspector spoke with the nursery owner, manager, staff and children at appropriate times throughout the day.
- The inspector looked at documentation, including children's records, learning and development information, staff records and a selection of policies and procedures.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents through discussion and from written questionnaires sent out by the nursery.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Janet Fairhurst

Full Report

Information about the setting

High Bank Nursery was registered in 2003 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is one of two privately owned provisions. It operates from five rooms in a renovated building on a working farm close to Darlington. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery serves the local and surrounding communities. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. There are currently 123 children on roll in the early years age range.

The nursery employs 17 members of staff. Of these, 16 hold appropriate early years qualifications. It supports a number of children, who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- increase the amount of print and number signs outside to enhance children's understanding of number recognition and that words have meaning, in order to further support their good early literacy and mathematical skills

- provide more open-ended play resources that are non-prescriptive and can be used in an imaginative way, for example, lengths of fabric, tarpaulins, cardboard boxes of various sizes and real life objects.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff's knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage is secure and they provide a range of opportunities for children to play and learn. They ensure they gain an insight into children's starting points, on which they are able to plan future learning opportunities. Throughout the nursery, staff record their observations of children at play to assess their learning. They use the intuitive observations successfully to plan for children's continued progress in all areas of learning. Staff have recently refined the required progress check at age two, which now has a clear focus on the prime areas. Any gaps in children's learning is quickly identified and sensitively shared with parents. As a

consequence, additional support from outside agencies can be requested if it is appropriate. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families are very well supported by staff to reach their full potential in this fully inclusive setting. Staff support children, who speak English as an additional language well by learning and using key phrases of the child's home language within the setting.

Children are confident, self-possessed and keen to share their ideas and ask questions. As learners, they are inquisitive, curious and eager to investigate. Staff in the pre-school room extend learning by asking probing questions, which make children think. For example, when cutting fruit, children are encouraged to consider and explain about the sharpness of knives and the texture of fruit. Children are confident and work very cooperatively with their peers and this has a positive effect on all aspects of their learning. For example, they are motivated to explore the various activities, yet are easily able to sit and enjoy stories or listen to instructions when necessary. Children develop good pre-writing skills because the staff provide interesting opportunities for them to do this. Children have great fun making marks outdoors with the brushes and water or they jot down notes as they play in the role play cafe. Staff take account of the various ways in which children learn and recognise the need for boys to be outdoors. Here a group of boys work collaboratively and diligently stacking bricks, mixing sand and water and balancing tubes. Staff fully understand when to intervene and when to stand back and allow children to experiment and test their own skills. This allows children to explore and consolidate a range of skills, such as, sharing, estimating, weight and counting, all of which are important skills for the next stage in their learning, for example, school.

Pre-school children and older toddlers listen well and they are confident in speaking to one another, to adults or during circle time. They enjoy stories and show great interest in books. Some children are beginning to use and link sounds, as staff begin to naturally thread sounds in their everyday language. Children increasingly hear staff using mathematical language. For example, they make marks on the outside wall using water and a brush and staff use terms, such as 'up' and 'down'. Children also show a good understanding of shape and size as they build and construct. The indoor environment is rich in print and number signs, which is effective in supporting children's early literacy and mathematical skills. However, this is not extended to the outdoors to further strengthen the children's good literacy and numeracy skills while playing outside.

Naturally curious and keen to learn, children's skills for the future are developed through a good range of problem solving activities, such as completing jigsaw puzzles and sorting animals into different types. Children use technology confidently and are inquisitive and investigate how things work. For example, babies show excitement as they push buttons and use wind-up toys, while older children use the computer with increased confidence. Children benefit from a range of sensory experiences; they use sand, water and dough on a daily basis, exploring textures, weights and consistencies as they have fun with pouring, scooping and cutting. However, the range available does not routinely include open-ended resources, which children can use, move and combine in a variety of ways. This means that opportunities for them to play and explore imaginatively are less well promoted.

Babies and toddlers are well supported and their time is made fun. Their introduction to books and literacy is promoted well. Staff sit with babies and encourage them to feel the

textures on the pages and talk about the pictures of animals, developing their early communication skilfully. Language is further encouraged through babies great enjoyment of singing and rhymes. Young toddlers delight in their play with shaving foam, using their senses to smell and feel the different textures. They excitedly join in with action songs because staff show this is fun by using props, such as sock puppets. Within the well-resourced baby room, staff give priority to the prime areas of learning to ensure children have a secure foundation to build on for future learning. For example, they foster babies physical development well by supporting them to climb, roll and balance safely. Children develop their creativity and enjoy using a good range of media and materials. They demonstrate a sense of pride in their creations and are keen to share their achievements with others. For example, one child is keen to talk to the inspector about the tiger they have made and how it has two whiskers. Children develop a sensitive awareness of diversity and an understanding of the needs of others. This is achieved through a good range of resources and planned activities, which promote a positive outlook of the wider world and take into account their individual interests, for example, celebrating Hanukah. In addition, children also develop an understanding that people speak in other languages as they participate in their weekly French lesson.

Children have plenty of opportunities to exercise and develop their all-round physical skills as they explore their exciting and very well-resourced outdoor play environment freely on a daily basis. For example, they climb on the climbing frame, hide in the willow den and dig in the sand and bark trays. Children learn about nature and their local environment as they go for walks. They also take full advantage of their farm environment. For instance, they are able to observe the growth of the calves and help to bottle feed them. Children tend and water a range of vegetables, which they have planted in the garden and plan to eat them when they are grown. This gives them first-hand experiences of living things and how to care for them. Frequent use of small equipment, such as, scissors, crayons, brushes and construction help older children develop good hand and finger control. Staff also understand the physical needs of the youngest children, providing plenty of space for babies to roll and crawl. They encourage babies to pull themselves up and carefully support babies when they are sitting.

Effective arrangements are in place to keep parents fully informed and involved in their children's learning. This is achieved through staff sharing regular written notes in the form of daily activity sheets with them. In addition to this, staff regularly communicate with parents on arrival and collection. Staff encourage parents to read their child's learning journal and share what they have been doing at home, including any new interests they may have.

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

Children are happy and eager to attend this welcoming nursery. Close bonds are established between each child, their allocated key person and other staff. This means that children's sense of security is fostered well. Parents provide valuable information about their children's background, interests and abilities when they first start to attend. This enables staff to quickly identify each child's starting points and begin to tailor learning experiences to the interests and abilities of individual children. Children play and learn in a

friendly and stimulating environment. The play areas are child-orientated, with low-level labelled storage, which helps children to become independent learners. Staff promote children's behaviour in a positive way and as a result, children are well behaved and learn good social skills. For example, they learn good manners by saying 'please' and 'thank you' at mealtimes and understand that they need to tidy away toys they have used.

Staff work effectively with parents and colleagues to support children's smooth transitions when moving to a new age group and base room in the nursery. Children are also well prepared for the next stage in their learning because staff give careful consideration to preparing them for school. For example, children are becoming increasingly independent as they manage their personal care, serve themselves at mealtimes and dress themselves for outdoor play. Staff praise children effectively and this develops high levels of self-esteem and confidence. Consequently, children are confident to help prepare for activities, such as, pouring the oats into the bowl to make the porridge.

All children benefit from fresh air each day as they enjoy the extremely well-resourced outdoor areas. They develop awareness of how to keep healthy through being active. Children are clearly gaining an understanding of healthy eating through their many interesting topics and through the nutritious, freshly cooked meals they are served. Older children are aware of the reasons for drinking. For instance, they explain that water is required if you are thirsty and they have opportunities to drink frequently. Children learn the necessary skills to keep themselves safe. This is because the staff have a good understanding of how children need to make some mistakes, in order to develop these skills. For example, the staff are caring and cheerful when the babies occasionally wobble over, yet do not limit their development by being over-protective. Similarly, the older children are encouraged to use the climbing frame while staff watch carefully and remind them to hold on when necessary.

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

The manager has a good understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements, which ensure children are effectively safeguarded. All staff have attended relevant training and demonstrate a good understanding of their role and responsibility with regard to safeguarding children; consequently, children are well protected. Systems are in place to monitor visitors to the setting and ensure that relevant identification is produced before being permitted entry. Policies and procedures are robust, which means that children's welfare is promoted and these are shared with parents. Risk assessments are comprehensive and effectively implemented by staff. Robust recruitment, vetting and induction procedures ensure that all staff are well qualified and suitable to work with children. Ongoing staff appraisal, staff meetings and supervision means that staff are given good support, direction and coaching to build on their already good practice. The manager has a secure knowledge of the learning and development requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage and along with the deputy is often involved in the care of the children. Together, they make regular observations of all staff and monitor the educational programmes to identify what needs to be further enhanced.

Staff work very well with parents and carers, in order to support children and meet their individual needs. Communication with parents about children's care, learning and development is a key strength of the nursery. Parents are regularly consulted through a variety of channels and their views are welcomed. Information is shared regarding children's learning journals and how parents can contribute to these and they are made available at all times for parents perusal. In addition, notice boards, newsletters, parents' evenings and questionnaires provide further opportunities for a two-way exchange of information. Children's learning and progress is supported because parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning. For example, parents have recently attended training to encourage the use of story sacks. Parents are very happy with the service they receive. Comments, such as 'we are very happy with the professionalism of the staff and genuine love and care shown by them' exemplifies their satisfaction with the service provided. The setting maintains positive links with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example, children's development is shared with schools and other settings working with children are invited to share information in children's communication diaries.

Systems of self-evaluation and action plans are well targeted to improve outcomes for children. Consequently, the capacity to make ongoing improvements is strong. Regular communication between staff, parents and the management team means that good practice and the desire to make the setting the best that they can is encouraged and shared. Reflective practice is ongoing at all levels and most recommendations raised at the last inspection have been fully addressed. Staff have also reflected on some of the space used by babies and experimented with colours, such as lilac, as through training, they have established that this colour has a calming effect for young children. This demonstrates that they are using training effectively in practice to children's learning and development.

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	EY259723
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	909153
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	65
Number of children on roll	123
Name of provider	Lesley & Alan Thompson Partnership
Date of previous inspection	10/06/2010
Telephone number	01325 365885

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Type of provision

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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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Store St
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M1 2WD

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