

Maidendale Nursery

Maidendale House, Burnside Road, DARLINGTON, County Durham, DL1 4SU

Inspection date	12/09/2013
Previous inspection date	12/09/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	4
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Not all staff have a sufficient knowledge and understanding of how to use observational assessment to understand each child's level of achievement within the seven areas of learning and to then use this information to plan future learning experiences for each child.
- Staff working with the two to three year age group do not implement the required progress check at age two. Consequently, they do not identify any areas where their progress is less than expected, and parents are not provided with a short written summary of their child's development in the prime areas.
- The deployment of and communication between staff is not effective in enabling them to consistently meet children's learning and emotional needs.
- Staff supervision is not robust, in order to provide staff with appropriate support and coaching to develop their knowledge and skills to promote the interests and learning needs of children.
- Staff do not always identify hazards in the environment or take appropriate action to minimise risks to children.

It has the following strengths

- Children with special educational needs are supported appropriately. Staff work with parents and other professionals to ensure that individual needs are met.

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 the playgroup and throughout the nursery in both the indoor and outdoor spaces.
- The inspector spoke with the chief executive, manager, staff and children at appropriate times throughout the day.
- The inspector looked at documentation including children's records, learning and development information, staff information 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

Maidendale Nursery first opened in March 2004 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It was registered again to a board of trustees in June 2007. The nursery is situated within Firthmoor Community Centre in Darlington. It operates from four playrooms within the building. The nursery have recently taken over the management of the playgroup which operates from the room known as the youth hall, also situated within the building. Children have access to two separate enclosed outdoor play areas. The nursery also provides out of school care and wraparound care. There are currently 156 children on roll. Of these, 107 are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-year-old children and 36 sessions/ places for two- and three-year-old children. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language. The nursery is open each weekday between the hours of 7.45am to 6pm all year round, with the exception of public holidays and the period between Christmas and New Year. There are 21 members of staff employed to work directly with the children. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- develop staff's knowledge of how to use observational assessment to understand each child's level of achievement within the seven areas of learning and to then use this information to plan future learning experiences for each child
- implement the progress check at age two, to identify children's strengths and where their progress is less than expected, and provide parents with a short written summary of their development in the prime areas of learning
- improve staff supervision, to ensure that appropriate coaching and training provides support for staff and promotes the interests and learning outcomes of children
- review and improve the deployment of staff working in the playgroup to enable them to meet the physical and emotional needs of the children
- improve communication between staff to ensure that during any absences children's learning needs are known and can be consistently met.

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

- improve risk assessments to include all aspects of the environment that need to be checked and include the action taken to address the risk, with specific reference to the metal posts in small garden area.

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

Children's learning potential is not fully maximised. This is because methods used, by some staff, to observe children, assess progress and then plan suitable experiences are not fully embedded. Management have identified this as a development need for some staff and have planned support from the local authority in this respect. As a result, some staff are still developing their confidence and understanding of the observation and assessment methods. Furthermore, in the absence of a child's key person insufficient knowledge of their specific learning needs are known by other members of staff. This potentially has a negative impact on staff's ability to plan effectively to meet children's next steps. Staff have insufficient knowledge and understanding of the progress checks at age two and are not aware that a summary of children's progress in the prime areas needs to be provided and shared with parents. This means that they are not well-placed

to identify any area where progress is less than expected, and to agree with parents how this will be addressed. Nonetheless, children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are engaged and keen to participate in the experiences available to them.

On the whole, children who have attended the nursery for sometime are making steady progress. The nursery has some committed and enthusiastic staff who work hard to capture and maintain children's interests. Children's communication skills are fostered well in the baby room as staff chat and talk to them about what they are doing. Staff model conversations with babies and echo the sounds they make. They encourage lots of interaction with facial expressions and good eye contact. This supports young children's emerging language skills well. Older toddlers enjoy listening to favourite stories and joining in with popular nursery rhymes and songs. Pre-school children are generally confident communicators and express their wishes freely. Although staff in the playgroup try hard to spend quality time with the children there are periods of disruption caused by the split arrival and departure times. In addition, staff adhere to set routines where children are required to stop playing to join circle time or have snack. This hinders the opportunities for children to follow their own lines of enquiry, extend their ideas and develop the characteristics of effective learning. Staff interact positively with the playgroup children during some activities. For instance, they model how to make marks with the pencils. While children remain focused, staff do not develop children's vocabulary by introducing words that relate to their play and do not enthuse them during the activity. Consequently, at times learning is delivered at a basic level that does not stimulate children sufficiently. This means that the time spent talking and encouraging children communication skills is hampered.

Children's early number skills are promoted through singing number rhymes, matching activities and puzzles, ensuring they experience some mathematical concepts. Staff encourage older children to label their own work and practise their writing skills in a variety of ways, such as drawing, painting and using chalk. This supports their literacy and mark making skills. All children have access to variety of books and space where they can relax and sit in comfort. The staff plan a variety of craft activities which children enjoy. For example, they love the opportunity to make mark in the shaving foam and pretend to make cakes with cubes of jelly and pasta. Pre-school children enjoy the tactile experience as they play in the large sand area. Staff encourage children to talk about the sensation of the sand between their toes. Children choose their preferred activities, for example, painting. When children ask for the colour pink staff encourage them to think about colours they will need to make pink. This offers an opportunity to experiment with different colours and fosters their investigative skills.

Pre-school children gain some of the skills they will need when they move on to school. For example, they gain some self-care skills as they put on their jumpers ready for outdoor play. Toddlers learn about living things as they tend their flowers and carrots they have planted. This helps promote children's understanding of the natural world. Staff working with babies are very aware of their developing needs. They have re-organised their base room so that emerging skills, such as, climbing and crawling are further supported. Children within the nursery have sufficient opportunities to play outdoors and join in physical play. They happily involve staff and have fun competing against each other

as they race around on the scooters and trikes. This supports their physical development. However, staff in the playgroup do not actively include daily outdoor play within the session. This means children's physical skills are hampered. Staff inform parents about their children's progress through sharing children's learning records and daily discussions with the key person. Parents are provided with opportunities to borrow resources, such as 'chatty bags' and activities to support their children's learning at home.

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

Children are generally happy and settled in the nursery. Staff show a caring approach to the children they look after and children are confident to turn to staff for help and support. As part of children's settling-in procedure, staff encourage parents to visit with their children prior to the placement starting. This allows time for children to form relationships with their key person and contributes to their well-being during the transition from home. However, for the two-year-old children based in the playgroup this has not taken place. This is because the staff work term time only and the management have not taken this into account when organising start dates for the children. Consequently, staff describe how they have had very limited time to establish secure relationships with the children and their parents to support their emotional well-being and sense of security. In addition, the management have not fully considered the impact on both staff and children with regard to having two start and finish times. This means, that staff are taken away from the children to greet or exchange information with the parents arriving, and this causes some of the children to become unsettled and distressed.

Children have access to a range of resources which are stored at their level making them easily accessible. For example, babies can easily reach toys placed, by staff, in boxes and baskets on the floor in their room. Children who transfer to another room in the nursery are provided with appropriate settling-in opportunities as they spend gradually increasing amounts of time in their new room. Older children are prepared for the transition on to school as the staff take them to see their new school. Staff attend the local school community meeting, providing an opportunity to share information with the local teachers. Staff help children to develop their independence. For example, older children are encouraged to take on roles within the setting, such as setting the table for lunch. This gives them a sense of pride and achievement. Children behave well and good manners are evident. Staff manage children's behaviour calmly and consistently, and provide them with positive role models to follow. Staff ensure that children understand behaviour expectations and use a range of strategies to manage children's behaviour. For example, with the older children, staff use discussion and encourage them to consider the consequences of their actions. They use praise, encouragement and rewards, such as stickers, to help to raise children's self-esteem. Furthermore, children are taught and encouraged to make choices and therefore, develop a sense of control over their learning.

Children's health is promoted. For example, the baby room apply a no shoe policy which means babies are able to crawl around in a clean and hygienic space. Children are well-nourished as they are provided with a range of healthy and nutritious snacks and meals

with their individual allergies and dietary needs adhered to. Children have time to eat at their own pace and mealtimes are social occasions where staff and children sit together and talk about what they have been doing. Most of the children regularly use the outdoor areas and learn about the benefits of exercise and fresh air. Children adopt good personal hygiene routines and many deal with their own personal needs without prompting, further developing their independence. Staff adhere to a strict collection policy and routinely ask for passwords so that children are only released into the care of authorised individuals. This assures children safety. Children learn how to keep themselves safe through everyday practice and routines. For example, staff remind children not to run indoors and to sit safely on their chairs.

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

This inspection took place following the notification of an incident when a child left the premises unsupervised for a short period of time. The inspection found that, at the time of this incident, arrangements for keeping the building secure were not sufficiently robust and prone to human error. However, the management team have taken swift action. For example, they have had an additional gate fitted to prevent children accessing the external gate. The manager explained that they have carried out a full and thorough investigation into the incident. They have reviewed the risk assessments and implemented new procedures to make sure that all staff now follow more rigorous security procedures to ensure children's safety. Overall, children are safe in the nursery.

The manager has satisfactory awareness of the safeguarding and welfare requirements which mean children are suitably safeguarded. All staff take part in child protection training. This ensures that they understand their responsibilities towards the children at the nursery and know what steps to take if they have concerns about a child. Recruitment, vetting and induction processes for all adults who work with the children, or come into contact with them, are secure. For example, all staff working at the premises complete Disclosure and Barring Service checks. This ensures that staff are suitable to work with children. Due to the recent incident, staff's awareness has been heightened and children's safety is reasonably well-promoted and the environment is mostly free from hazards. However, in relation to risk assessments there is scope to improve them, as they are not always thorough enough to identify and effectively manage all potential hazards. For example, unlike the metal posts in the large garden area, which are wrapped with padded covers the large metal post in the small garden used by the toddlers is not covered.

The manager has a sound understanding of how children learn and acquire skills. However, not all staff demonstrate a secure enough understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage, to effectively support children's learning and development. The nursery has recently taken over the running of the playgroup. This has led to some changes to staff responsibilities. The lack of the training and ongoing support to mentor staff effectively means that they are not secure in their roles. Overall, the monitoring of the nursery is ineffective. This is with regard to the deployment of the playgroup staff to ensure they are able to effectively meet children's learning and care

needs, such as regular provision of outdoor play and during arrival and departure times. As well as this, the manager has failed to monitor the effectiveness of the communication between staff to ensure in their absence that colleagues are able to fully meet children's ongoing learning needs.

The manager carries out staff appraisals and recently more regular room observation have been introduced. However, this is not robust enough to effectively address underperformance and identify solutions to improve individual personal performance. Consequently, some of the staff's professional knowledge and understanding is not fully effective in ensuring all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage, specifically the progress check at age two, are understood and consistently applied. Partnership with parents is positive. Regular parents' evenings, access to children's learning records and daily dairy sheets give parents opportunities to find out how their children are developing. Parents spoken to during the inspection are very complimentary about the nursery. They say their children enjoy going to nursery, and that they are pleased with their progress. The nursery liaises with others, such as health professionals and specialist workers, to support any specific health requirements and the identification and inclusion of any child with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The managers understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the nursery is not fully accurate. She has identified that there are variations in practice within the nursery and staff knowledge of planning and learning needs developing. She continues to try to address these issues through training and support from the local authority advisor. However, these actions have not yet secured enough improvement for all children in the nursery. As a result, there is still too much inconsistent practice, which affects the quality of the children's learning experiences.

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	EY358816
Local authority	Darlington
Inspection number	935211
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	156
Name of provider	Firth Moor & District Community Assn Committee
Date of previous inspection	12/09/2011
Telephone number	01325 376723

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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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