

Minus Fives Childrens Day Nursery

William Crosthwaite Avenue, Teeside Industrial Estate, Thornaby, STOCKTON-ON-TEES, TS17 9LX

Inspection date	30/09/2013
Previous inspection date	25/09/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	2
	Previous inspection:	2
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's communication and language skills are developing very well. This is because staff engage in a wide range of conversations with children and successfully help to promote children's critically thinking.
- Children are happy, settled and share positive relationships with others. They enjoy warm and friendly interactions with staff, which helps them to feel safe and secure. They are well behaved, respond well to staff and play cooperatively together.
- The staff have a good understanding of how to promote the health and safety of the children. They have assessed the risks well and have minimised these so children are able to use all areas in their play.
- Children are cared for by staff who work successfully with parents to meet their individual needs. Relationships are warm and friendly, information is shared effectively verbally as well as via daily diaries.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is further scope to extend opportunities that help children's understanding of number, size and shape during their self-initiated play.
- Opportunities to enhance children's understanding of living things are not fully embraced.

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 compulsory part 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 area manager, acting nursery 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 from written questionnaires sent out by the nursery, and from the settings self-evaluation.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the acting nursery manager.

Inspector

Janet Fairhurst

Full Report

Information about the setting

Minus Fives Childrens Day Nursery was registered in 1989 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is part of the Nunthorpe Nurseries group which run several groups in the Cleveland area. The nursery is situated in the borough of Stockton on Tees in a quiet road on Thornaby Industrial Estate. It serves the local and surrounding areas. The nursery operates from a purpose-built one storey building with four activity rooms plus a room equipped with soft play materials. Children have free access to outdoor play. There are currently 55 children on roll, of these 43 are in early years group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It operates five days a week all year round excluding bank holidays. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. The nursery employs 10 members of child care staff. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, including one with Early Years Professional Status. The nursery receive support from the local authority early years advisory team.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance children's mathematical skills further by taking full advantage of spontaneous learning opportunities to extend their counting and awareness of size and shape
- deepen children's natural interest and fascination in bugs and insects by providing them with opportunities to learn more about where they live, what they eat and how they move, for example by; helping them to create low-level log piles and bug houses.

Inspection judgements

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

Children receive a good standard of care and education because staff have a clear understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and this is reflected in their practice. Planning is effective as it is led by children's current interests and information gained from parents through discussion and their completion of baseline assessments. Observations show all children take part in a range of play and learning experiences, which are based on the relevant areas of learning depending on ages and stages of development. Regular assessments show that children are making good progress. This information is used as the basis for the progress check at aged two years. Parents are actively involved in their

children's learning. Learning journals are readily available. Staff and parents both record 'wow' moments to share special events in the nursery and at home. Parents have regular contact with their children's key persons to share in their progress, and are therefore able to make a valuable contribution to their learning.

Children clearly enjoy coming to the nursery. They arrive eagerly ready to take part in the good range of activities that staff have organised. The activities follow topics which have been selected based upon the children's own developing interests. Activities are practical and involve children in learning through play. In this way, they learn for example, how to work co-operatively when they collect items to put in the cosy den. An adult is on hand to stimulate language development through asking open-ended questions which encourages children to think. Children's communication and language is supported well. Staff show a genuine interest in what children say and allow them time to talk and think during activities. Children under two years are supported very well to increase their vocabulary as they play. For example, staff continually repeat words and phrases and reinforce new words and change the tone of their voice to capture their attention. Staff are adept at interacting with children as they work and play. They tailor their questioning to match the ages and abilities of the children, which ensures that all children make good progress.

Children's opportunities to develop and practise making marks and writing skills is good and some of the pre-school children are beginning to record their names on their own work forming most of the letters correctly. For example, a child spells her name correctly to identify her picture as her own. Children show real pleasure in books because staff share books and read stories in a lively way that motivates children's interest. Babies readily respond to the staff's encouragement and support and delight in the stimulating surroundings, toys and equipment which are provided for them. For example, babies can easily see and help themselves to interesting toys of different textures, shapes and colours. They become absorbed as they play with a variety of metal objects, such as bowls, chains and whisks. Children are very involved and interested in everything they do. For example, children enjoy filling various containers with water, and playing with lentils, rice and dried beans. They build towers outdoors using large blocks. However, during these activities there are missed opportunities to fully stretch children's learning or to challenge them sufficiently in terms of developing their mathematical skills to move their learning on. Staff join in children's play sensitively, fitting in with their existing play themes. For example, as a child examines a map of the local area an adult uses this opportunity to effectively model being a thinker. The adult asks the child questions pretending that they do not know the answer; the child thinks really hard and is really proud when she is able to tell the adult what she needs to know. This approach positively encourages and promotes children's critical thinking. The opportunities for the children to develop their creative skills are promoted well to allow them to explore and select from a range of materials to decorate and design their pictures and models.

Children use technology well to support their learning. Older children enjoy access to the computer using various programmes that support their problem-solving skills. Younger children and babies like to play with interactive equipment and a variety of battery operated toys with flashing lights and musical noises to enhance their interest. Children show their curiosity and interest in caring for living things. Staff provide magnifying lens so children can examine creatures closely. However, staff have not yet considered how

this interest can be developed further, such as helping children to make bug houses so they explore in more depth how creatures live and what they need to survive. The nursery celebrates a range of festivals and traditions such as Diwali, Chinese New Year, Christmas and Easter. This good provision for cultural development enables the children to learn to appreciate their own cultural heritage and to understand that other cultures exist. The outdoor area is in constant use to promote and support children's development in all areas of learning. Children take turns sensibly to climb on and over the large apparatus, and show levels of physical development appropriate for their age as they balance, crawl and jump. Older children work co-operatively when building dens using tarpaulins, tubes and nets. Babies become increasingly physically confident because staff give them a helping hand, and they can also pull themselves up on and walk around sturdy low-level furniture.

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

The good relationship between home and the setting begins as the staff encourage children and their parents to visit before they start to attend. During the visits children's starting points and other relevant information is gathered from parents. This helps staff to make an initial assessment of children's capabilities, likes and dislikes and contributes towards their sense of security. As a result, parents, children and staff form a very effective partnership from the very beginning. The setting is organised well to enable the children to explore and investigate their surroundings. Resources are stored in low-level shelving units or trays which children can access independently to support their play ideas. Staff interact positively with the children, involving themselves in their play and offering appropriate assistance to enhance children's learning and enjoyment.

Staff support children in developing the skills, confidence and aptitudes ready for the next stage in their learning. When children move within the nursery, their key person accompanies them on settling-in sessions in their new room, and provides their new key person with a transition summary which brings them up to date about children's care, learning and development. Staff manage behaviour well and make sure that children understand the importance of considering others for example, in sharing and taking turns. They reinforce positive behaviour effectively with praise and encouragement to which children respond well. Good relationships are formed quickly as a result of staff treating the children in a considerate and positive way. Older children show care and concern for the younger ones. For example, a pre-school child is eager to share her found 'treasure' with another child in the hope that it will make him happy. Social manners are developed very well during meal times when the children talk in small groups about what they have done. As a result of this, the children rapidly develop very good levels of personal development.

Children enjoy healthy home cooked meals and snacks. They learn about healthy living and effective hygiene practice, through the good role models set by staff and through sensitive guidance. Children wash and dry their own hands before eating and after attending to their toileting needs with the younger ones, aided by staff when needed. A huge emphasis is placed upon the value and importance of plenty of fresh air and exercise as an effective means of maintaining children's good health. Children learn to keep

themselves safe in a range of situations. This was demonstrated in the way children moved safely around the setting, inside and outside, with care. Before outings are undertaken children are helped to consider how they can keep themselves safe, such as taking care when crossing the roads. They regularly take part in practice fire drills and staff intervene as necessary to remind children of safe practices as they play.

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

The acting manager has a good understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements which ensure that children's welfare, care and safety are promoted well. All staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues, have attended training and are aware of their role and responsibility in keeping children safe from harm. There are robust recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure the suitability of staff and good security measures in place to ensure children are kept safe at all times. Thorough induction of new staff and students means that all are clear about the expectations of their role, and understand key policies such as the whistle blowing and behaviour management. Effective risk assessments are carried out, as well as daily safety checks, to ensure all hazards are minimised. The staff team work closely together to further provide consistency and support for all children. 'Staff chats' and appraisals are used to identify any areas for improvement and staff are encouraged to extend their knowledge and expertise by attending training. The required staff child ratios are maintained throughout all day-to-day activities, and staff supervise children well as there is effective staff deployment at all times.

The acting manager has a good knowledge of the learning and development requirements for the Early Years Foundation Stage. She regularly monitors the educational curriculum and reviews practice with staff. Although there are no children on roll with special educational needs and/or disabilities or children with English as an additional language the staff know where to access advice and support if needed. There is an ongoing evaluation that includes the opinions of parents, children, staff and local authority advisors. This measures how effectively the nursery meets the needs of all the children that attend, and enables managers and staff to successfully assess the strengths and weaknesses within the nursery. Regular staff meetings ensure that improvements are well directed towards providing further stimulation and interest for children, as well as improving the service offered. For example, there has been improvement made to the outdoor area so children have greater access to open-ended resources and there is greater use of natural materials throughout the nursery. These improvements enhance children's overall experiences. In addition the recommendations from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. This collative approach to self-evaluation enables managers and staff to successfully assess the strengths and weaknesses within the nursery.

The nursery has a secure partnership with parents. There are good systems in place to share information and keep parents informed about their children's care and progress. For example, detailed discussion with the key person at collection time, daily care sheets and

diaries as well as regular access to their child's learning journal. Parents are offered ideas for activities to do at home and are given a feedback sheet and encouraged to complete 'wow' cards if their child attends a special event or they make an observation at home. These are then added to children's learning journals and staff add comments about the learning objectives covered. This combined with the excellent activity and story bags that parents are encouraged to use at home means that parents can be fully involved in their child's learning and development. Parents are valued and their views are sought and respected and used to make improvements to enhance the nursery. For example, responding to parents' wishes to learn more about the Early Years Foundation Stage the nursery have created a very informative and user-friendly booklet. Equally effective links with the local nursery and schools ensure that the transition to full-time education is smooth and seamless.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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	305965
Local authority	Stockton on Tees
Inspection number	933532
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	55
Name of provider	Nunthorpe Nurseries Group Ltd
Date of previous inspection	25/09/2008
Telephone number	01642 764606

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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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Piccadilly Gate
Store St
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M1 2WD

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