

Footsteps to Darras Hall

Darras Hall, Broadway, Ponteland, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, Tyne and Wear, NE20 9PP

Inspection date

14/10/2013

Previous inspection date

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

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 is promoted particularly well through positive interactions and enjoyable conversations with staff. Children display good levels of confidence and self-esteem which are key skills in their preparation for their next stage of learning.
- Children are happy and enjoy secure and trusting relationships with the staff who provide them with praise and encouragement. As a result, the children have high self-esteem and confidence and are enthusiastic learners.
- Well-established routines ensure children feel safe, behave well and are confident to select tasks and join in activities with adults and other children.
- The partnerships formed with the host school is good. This results in children's transitions being managed very effectively, to support a positive shared approach to their ongoing learning and development.

It is not yet outstanding because

- There is scope to develop a more consistent approach for information from parents in relation to their contribution to initial assessments of their children's starting points on entry to the nursery.
- The resources and images to reflect similarities and differences between communities, traditions and people with disabilities are not consistently available for the children to help fully develop their learning and understanding of diversity.

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 manager, staff and children 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 conducted a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Janet Fairhurst

Full Report

Information about the setting

Footsteps to Darras Hall nursery was registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a self-contained unit within the grounds of Darras Hall First School in Ponteland and is one of three settings run and managed by a charitable organisation. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. There is a holiday club which opens 8am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 88 children on roll, of whom 20 are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- build on the partnership with parents by improving the exchange of information in relation to their contribution to initial assessments of their children's starting points
- enhance children's opportunities to explore and play with resources and positive images of different communities, traditions and disabilities, in order to fully promote their understanding of similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff are knowledgeable about the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They have a good understanding of how children develop and the importance of providing activities that link to their interests, in order to engage them and support their learning. For example, if they know children like playing with trains they use these to encourage them to take part in other activities, such as counting, to further their learning. Regular observations and assessments of the children's progress are undertaken and recorded in the children's individual learning journal. The staff use this information to obtain a good understanding of the children's developmental stages and to plan for children's next steps in their learning. Parents are involved in most aspects of their children's learning. For example, their children's learning journey books and assessments are shared and discussed, and their comments are valued by staff. They are also actively involved in the completion of the progress check at age two. However, there

is scope to further enhance parents' contribution to children's starting points at the beginning of the placement in order to fully support their immediate interests and needs.

The quality of teaching and learning is good, and staff clearly demonstrate a secure understanding of how to help children achieve well. Staff talk purposefully with the children during their activities, asking questions to encourage them to think, recall and solve problems. For example, they talk to children about 'connecting' the track for the train, and encourage children to persevere as they try to work out how to join together the different pieces of track. Staff use everyday routines, such as circle time to engage children in friendly conversation, which encourages them to express their feelings and talk about events in their lives. Staff promote children's listening skills through reading stories. They maintain children's interest by inviting children's participation as they join in with familiar words and phrases. Early writing skills are encouraged as children draw and paint, and make patterns in the sand and shaving foam.

Staff use every opportunity to promote children's mathematical skills. For example, they use positional language, and encourage counting and discussions about colour, shape and size while children make models and build the train track. Staff enthusiastically shows an interest in what the children are doing, which helps them to feel respected and valued. For example, a member of staff comments on the progress a child has made completing a floor puzzle all by herself, and the child beams with delight at the praise. Children use their senses to explore a wide range of materials and media. For example, children like to investigate sand and water. Transferring water to and from various containers helps them to start to understand mathematical concepts, such as capacity. This good combination of support and learning experiences provided by the staff successfully prepare all children to move onto the next stage in their learning, such as school.

Children regularly use the role play area, for example, they pretend to buy food at the shop and use the till to scan their goods. This extends and effectively promotes children's own ideas and provides good experiences for children to re-enact real-life experiences. Staff encourage children's curiosity in nature through activities such as growing flowers and vegetables. Children learn about changes in nature as they collect the leaves and conkers that have fallen from the trees. They have opportunities to use technology such as the computer and other programmable toys. There is scope for improving children's opportunities to learn about similarities and differences within communities and traditions, as well as disability. They learn about festivals, however, many of the resources and images that promote positive attitudes about diversity and difference are not routinely made available to the children. Therefore, their learning opportunities in this area are not fully developed. Children thoroughly enjoy being outside and relish the interaction from staff. For example, the children become engrossed in an imaginary swimming adventure, putting on their pretend snorkels and armbands ready to swim in the sea. The staff adeptly encouraging them to use large arm movements and run around as they swim away from the sharks. Children physical skills are further supported as they learn good coordination rolling the hoops and skipping.

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

Children form secure attachments because they are given time to settle and establish strong relationships with their preferred key person. Staff liaise with parents to find out children's favourite toys and activities, which they provide to help children feel a sense of connection to their home. This also helps to increase children's level of confidence and to separate more easily from their parents. Staff are kind and caring, which helps children to form secure emotional attachments. Children display comfortable relationships with their key person, seeking them out for reassurance or to play alongside them. The nursery is set up to enable the children to explore and investigate their surroundings. Low-level units and clearly labelled resources enable children to self-select activities and resources, promoting their independence and decision-making skills from an early age. The nursery has good systems in place to help assist children who are due to move to the next stage in their learning. For example, they invite teachers from the school to visit the nursery. This helps with children's transition into school and provides a valuable opportunity for children to meet their future teachers in an environment where they feel comfortable.

Staff have high expectations of the children and encourage their independence by giving them appropriate responsibility to undertake tasks, such as putting on their own coat and washing their own hands. Staff provide praise and encouragement consistently for children spurring them to try new activities and develop their independence. Children behave well in the nursery. This is because staff are good role models and use a consistent range of strategies to show children the expected behaviours within the nursery. Children learn to share, take turns and consider the needs of others as they play, helping them in building relationships. Staff respond well when behaviour changes occur and talk gently to children to ensure their feelings are accepted and acknowledged.

Children's understanding of healthy practice is well-supported. They have frequent opportunities to enjoy outdoor play and a range of healthy, nutritional meals and snacks are provided. Mealtimes are social occasions which staff use effectively to promote good table manners and to develop children's social skills. While staff expect children to be independent and free to explore their environment, they are vigilant in ensuring that they come to no harm, for example reminding children to take care and not to run indoors. Children are supported to recognise different hazards as they play; they help to tidy up so areas are safe for other activities. When on visits in the community children learn about crossing the road and become familiar with the environment and staying safe.

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

Management and staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities in meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements. Clear recruitment procedures mean that staff are checked for their suitability to work with children. Staff have a good understanding of how to protect children from harm. This includes recognising signs and symptoms that would cause concern, and knowing the procedures to follow. They keep their knowledge about child protection issues up-to-date through training and regular discussions. Children are

well-supervised, and the staff are vigilant in ensuring that children stay safe. For example, daily safety checks are undertaken, internal doors and external gates are kept secure, staff open the door individually as parents arrive and visitors identification is checked and recorded in a visitor's book. Staff-to-child ratios are well-met, which ensures that the staff can provide the children with positive interactions and experiences. Written risk assessments are in place and are regularly reviewed to ensure that any potential hazards are identified and risks are minimised.

The manager and staff have a good understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and support children well as they move towards the early learning goals. There are clear systems for monitoring staff effectiveness. The supervision and appraisals of staff ensures they receive support if needed to improve their personal effectiveness and identify training needs. As a result, staff are supported in their professional development and this makes sure that children benefit from current childcare practices and knowledgeable staff. Effective systems are in place which provide the manager with a clear overview of children's progress. This ensures that assessments are precise and accurate, and any gaps in children's learning are identified and addressed. Despite the nursery only being open for a few weeks the staff have established secure partnerships with parents. Staff provide them with a range of information about the nursery through displays, noticeboards and newsletters. They also provide parents with daily diary sheets outlining children's personal care routines and activities they have enjoyed. This combined with free access to their children learning journey means that parents are kept well-informed, and able to carry on their children's learning at home.

Monitoring and evaluation is ongoing and the manager is aware of the strengths of the nursery and the areas that need developing. Good leadership and a positive role model enables the staff to reflect and evaluate their practice as they work together to meet the individual needs of all children. Staff show a positive attitude to making sure they offer good quality provision and include the views of parents. This helps identify clear areas for development and continues to enhance children's learning experiences. Parents also have the opportunity to have an active voice in their child's learning and the running of the nursery by acting as a parent representative.

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	EY461359
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	916791
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	32
Number of children on roll	88
Name of provider	Footsteps to Ashfield
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	01661821414

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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

T: 0300 123 4234
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