

Portico Lodge

Portico Lane, Eccleston Park, ST HELENS, Merseyside, L35 7JS

Inspection date	05/11/2013
Previous inspection date	22/03/2011

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 emotional well-being is successfully promoted by the warm and caring staff team. Positive engagement with parents means children's personal needs are known. This means children are very well supported, secure and settled at the nursery.
- Comprehensive observation and planning procedures are in place which identify children's next steps in learning as they move towards the early learning goals. Well organised tracking systems show children are progressing well.
- Teaching is good as staff use available opportunities during play to extend children's knowledge and skills. This means children make good progress.
- Managers and staff have a good understanding of safeguarding and health and safety procedures. This helps to ensure that children remain safe and secure at all times.
- There are rigorous processes in place for self-evaluation which includes the views of parents. As a result, the setting is continuously improving.

It is not yet outstanding because

- On some occasions, staff do not always ask open-ended questions to support children's thinking.
- There is scope to provide more opportunities for parents to continue their child's learning at home, so they make even better progress.

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 playrooms and the garden.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held meetings with the provider and the manager.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability of practitioners working with children, the providers self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- The inspector spoke to parents and children.

Inspector
Anne Parker

Full report

Information about the setting

Portico Lodge Nursery registered in 2002 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting is one of six nurseries owned and managed by a limited company. The nursery is situated within a refurbished residential property in the Eccleston Park area of St. Helens. The nursery serves a wide catchment area and is accessible to all children. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery employs nine members of staff. Eight staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and one holds a qualification at level 2. The manager also has qualifications in management and leadership at level 3.

The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30am to 6pm for 51 weeks of the year. There are currently 55 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. 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:

- support staff to maintain a consistent approach to promoting children's thinking; by more regular use of open-ended questioning

- build on ways of sharing strategies with parents so they have more opportunities to continue their child's learning at home, so they make even better progress.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have a good understanding of how children learn and use this knowledge to plan challenging and interesting activities that meet the needs of all children at the setting. They gather a wide range of information from parents about what children can do and what they already know when they start at the nursery. This ensures staff form an accurate assessment of the child's starting points and plan appropriate activities to support their learning and development. Tracking of children's assessment shows that all children are making good progress at the setting. There are a range of strategies in place to encourage parents to share information about their child, such as communication books, and a display in each room where parents can add comments or observations from home. However, not all parents are aware of how they can continue their child's learning at home to help them make even better progress. Staff routinely observe children and use this to assess their learning and development and this is regularly shared with parents.

Children who attend the setting are supported to gain the skills they need to be effective learners which ensures they are ready for school. Children have access to a range of books and other printed media, and words and numbers are displayed around each room which supports children's literacy and numeracy skills. Teaching is good as staff frequently use opportunities during play to extend children's learning. For example, staff count the blocks as younger children pile them one on top of the other to make a tower. Staff play with children and talk to them about what they are doing. This ensures children develop good communication and language skills. For example, as older children play with a range of cardboard boxes and other materials to develop a pirate ship, a staff member supports them to act out the Peter Pan story. She prompts them with questions to help direct the play. However, other opportunities to support children's thinking skills are not always maximised by staff using open-ended questions to encourage children to work things out for themselves.

Staff support children's physical development by providing opportunities to play outside. For example, children dig in the garden to find worms and other creatures. Some children have regular access to a sports coach who develops a range of activities that the children enjoy.

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

Staff at the setting are caring and warm which ensures children form strong attachments and promotes their emotional wellbeing. Children settle at nursery quickly because there is an effective key person system in place. Staff use a range of strategies to support children through transitions and, therefore, they are emotionally prepared for their move within the setting and into school. Parents know who their child's key person is and feel able to discuss any issues they may have with them. Younger children express their needs by pointing or babbling and staff are able to interpret their non-verbal communication because they know each child well. Older children demonstrate that they feel safe as they are able to come to staff with concerns they have or for reassurance and cuddles and staff respond appropriately to this. Children are learning about the importance of healthy food as staff talk about the vegetables in their lasagne and explain how good they are for their bodies.

The environment is welcoming and stimulating, providing a wide range of resources on low-level storage which children can access for themselves, therefore, their independence is promoted and they are becoming active learners. The outdoor area provides ample opportunities for children to experience risk and try out new experiences. For example, children play with shaving foam on a tarpaulin sheet but soon realise they can make soap hand and foot prints all over the garden. Staff develop this activity further by providing them with a varied range of brushes to continue making patterns. Staff support children's understanding of diversity by planning a range of activities to teach them about different cultures and staff use resources promoting images of people from different backgrounds. Children gain an understanding of their own community through visits to local amenities and displays showing places of interest, such as the library and fire station.

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

The provider and the manager both were able to evidence a good understanding of their responsibility to ensure the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are fully met. There are robust recruitment and selection procedures and staff are monitored to ensure children are protected and staff's ongoing suitability is assured. The setting has a range of policies and procedures in place to help staff to keep children safe. These are reviewed regularly and implemented consistently across the setting. Staff have a good understanding of how to keep children safe. Access to the setting is carefully controlled and parents and staff are frequently reminded of the procedures for collecting children and the use of passwords. Staff assess for risks continuously and address issues, such as spillages, immediately. Accidents are carefully recorded and this information is shared with parents. Accident reports are monitored to identify risks which could be avoided. Staff are well informed about safeguarding issues and demonstrate an understanding and willingness to act appropriately. For example, staff know how to report concerns that they have about the welfare of children or behaviour of staff and other adults.

The provider and the manager have a clear understanding of their responsibility to meet the learning and development requirements of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundations Stage. Secure systems are in place to monitor planning and assessment to ensure staff are fully aware of children's progress. There is an effective tracking procedure which ensures identification of gaps in development for individual child as well as particular groups, such as those whose starting points are lower than expected when they start the setting. There are effective systems in place for managing the performance of staff, which includes regular supervision. Areas for improvement are identified and appropriate training or coaching is put into place. Staff are given targets which are regularly reviewed and this is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and children's learning and development.

Self-evaluation is continuous, thorough and involves the views of parents and children. As a result, there are clear improvement plans in place for each room and for the setting as a whole. Partnerships with parents and other agencies are well developed and this means that staff can access other services to support the development of children in their care.

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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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	EY222717
Local authority	St. Helens
Inspection number	939378
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	55
Name of provider	Portico Day Nurseries Limited
Date of previous inspection	22/03/2011
Telephone number	0151 430 8005

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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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