

Merryvale Nursery

50 Merrivale Road, Halesowen, West Midlands, B62 9RL

Inspection date

16/04/2014

Previous inspection date

24/02/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

1

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- Extremely consistent teaching enables all children to make the best progress they can, given their varying starting points and abilities.
- Staff have high expectations about what and how children learn through inspired and exciting experiences that are well planned and delivered with enthusiasm and passion.
- Children are highly respected and trusted in being able to test out their confidence and skills, particularly with well-assessed opportunities to take risks in the outdoor environment, promoting their awareness of danger and identifying hazards for themselves.
- Safeguarding arrangements in the nursery are rigorous and all staff are confident in the action they would take to protect children from harm.
- Partnerships with parents are extremely effective in ensuring they are actively involved with their children's learning and development right from the start of their child's time in the nursery, preparing children well for the next steps in their lives.
- Inspired leadership and management drives continuous improvement as the highly focused process of constant reflection and self-evaluation involves and responds to the views of staff, parents and children.

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 spoke with the owner and manager during the course of the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children, observing practice indoors and outside throughout the inspection.
- The inspector conducted joint observations with the manager during the inspection.
- The inspector took account of comments and views from parents and from written documentation obtained by the nursery.
- The inspector examined a range of documentation including policies and procedures, records of staff clearances and appraisals, risk assessments, and children's developmental records.

Inspector

Patricia Webb

Full report

Information about the setting

Merryvale Nursery was registered in 1993 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in converted premises in Hurst green, Halesowen, West Midlands and is managed by a private limited company. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from rooms set out over two floors and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and 3. One member of staff is working towards a foundation degree. The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 75 children attending who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two, three and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- exploit children's exploratory drive and inquisitiveness in the natural world even further by completing the proposed work on the outdoor environment, thereby extending the challenge in their risky play opportunities.

Inspection judgements

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

Children make extremely strong progress in this vibrant and stimulating nursery. Staff show great enthusiasm and understanding of how children learn through exploration, inquisitiveness and excitement. Teaching is outstanding and consistent in delivering varied and learning opportunities. Observation and assessment are extremely accurate and precise. Children's achievements are observed and monitored and staff ensure that children have time to consolidate their learning before indicating that precise skills and aptitudes are achieved. Staff obtain a very high level of information from parents about their children's learning and development abilities, well as their care needs, from the start of their time in the nursery. This enables staff to plan right from the outset to identify and deliver specific planning to ensure each child reaches their full potential. There are a number of staff who have received training in the identification of special educational needs, meaning that any child who may require additional support to achieve receives targeted guidance from their dedicated key persons as well as from appropriate professionals and agencies. Planning takes account of children's home languages and

cultural backgrounds as they see different scripts written on signage round the setting. Parents also supply key words in home languages and staff use a range of non-verbal systems for promoting communication for all children and families. This includes pictorial routines, specific symbols and some sign language.

Staff have very high expectation about what and how children can learn. A current topic on growth is raising children's awareness of life cycles and the changes that take place as things grow. They bring in photographs of themselves as babies, measure and record their own growth using the height scale on the wall. They are also observing, monitoring and recording the development of the tadpoles. Such inspired teaching enables children to develop their understanding of the world, hone literacy and mathematical skills in their recording and use reference books to track growth. The children was recently excited when the caterpillars they had nurtured, evolved into butterflies which they released in the garden. Staff join in with the children's enthusiasm and excitement, encouraging them to explore and develop critical thinking. A child plays actively with the found and recycled resources in the garden; selecting a long plastic pipe, the child transports it to another part of the garden, having to negotiate a narrow gate. The child is observed closely by staff as the pipe is turned, rolled and manoeuvred through the gate and the child beams with the success of this achievement. Staff are intuitive enough to leave the child to solve the problem and therefore develop critical thinking skills. This demonstrates some of the exceptional teaching skills shown consistently by staff in the nursery.

Staff join the babies and young toddlers on the floor to encourage physical skills and the development of social skills and early communication. They roll actively over the soft play shapes and use shape sorters with emerging dexterity as they 'jump' with surprise when the shape pops up. They move with confidence between the spaces, honing, crawling and walking skills as they develop their curiosity and exploration. Staff work exceptionally well with parents and carers to ensure that they are fully involved in their children's learning and development. Parents read through the developmental records frequently and add written comments that support the partnerships between home and nursery. They also share what their children learn and enjoy at home, aware of the true partnership that supports children's holistic development and preparation for the next steps in their learning, such as, full time school. Events, such as, a recent trip to a chocolate factory, swimming awards and an acknowledgment of bravery during a hospital visit are displayed on the 'wow' boards and discussed with children during circle time, valuing their achievements.

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

Children are extremely settled and at ease as they enjoy very caring and secure attachments with their key persons. The specific staff forge strong relationships with parents to ensure that their individual needs are known, discussed and provided for to promote their welfare and well-being. Parents particularly like the 'blue book' that is used to develop daily communication between home and nursery, passing on such information as a child having disturbed sleep due to teething, for example. Routines are discussed and reviewed frequently to take account of children's changing needs and moods. Their

behaviour is exceptionally well managed. Staff encourage children to become aware of the impact their behaviour has on others, learning about the consequences of their actions. During a recent evaluation of the role play corner in preschool, it was noted that a high number of children were accessing the space at one time. Discussions with children at circle time resulted in staff asking them what might be done to address this. Children were aware of the possible safety issues and so 'risk-assessed' the situation for themselves. They decided on limiting the number of children in the home corner at one time and made their own signs to indicate this.

Children are involved in play which enables them to take risks that staff have assessed carefully to minimise hazards without 'sanitising' the thrill. This results in active, inquisitive children who explore and investigate. They clamber inside the conifer tree in the garden, seeking out the thrill of the 'dark and spooky' space. Such experiences help children to learn to cope with varying emotions and feelings, well as empowering them to risk assess dangers for themselves. This is an area which has scope to be developed further and extend children's interests in this type of play. They talk confidently about why they wear high visibility tabards when out and about and recall a recent trip on the bus to a park. They know that they need to use the lollipop person or controlled crossing for road safety. They use safe, suitable equipment and the vast array of resources, both commercial and recycled, to promote imagination in their play independently.

Children's health and well-being is promoted exceptionally positively. Outdoor and active play is made available every day, regardless of weather conditions. They experience fresh air and exercise, becoming healthy and active in their play. Older children know why routines, such as, hand washing are important in keeping healthy. Staff know children's individual medical and health needs and ensure that appropriate support is in place to maintain this. Children relish the healthy snacks and meals which are provided in line with individual dietary needs and preferences. The main lunches are provided by a catering company with regular discussions and reviews of the menus taking place between them and the nursery management. This ensures that meals are varied and nutritious. Older children show control over portion sizes as they serve themselves and clear away afterwards, developing their sense of responsibility and preparing them for the routines they will experience in school.

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

The owner and manager in the nursery have an extremely robust understanding of the requirements to safeguard children. All of the required documentation is maintained for the safe and efficient operation of the provision, with records readily available for inspection. They are acutely aware of the criteria for informing Ofsted of any significant incidents or changes to the operation of the setting, which may affect the care given to children. The safeguarding policies and procedures are known and followed diligently by all staff and students, who demonstrate a confident and concerted approach to identifying and reporting any child protection concerns they may have about a child in the nursery. This includes the action to be taken should they have any concerns about practice within

the setting. The owner is also very aware of ensuring that all staff are appropriately qualified and skilled, rigorous checks are carried out to ascertain their suitability to work with children. Management is also very conversant with additional regulations regarding safeguarding vulnerable groups. This dedication and commitment reassures parents of their children's safety and welfare. All staff are diligent and thorough in completing risk assessments both on and off the premises and supporting older children in participating in this process for themselves.

Thorough systems are in place for conducting staff appraisals and regular supervision of staff practice. Staff have the opportunity to share any sensitive issues with management and are supported in ensuring that this would not affect their ability to offer high quality care and teaching. The owner invests heavily in supporting and training staff as they hone their skills and develop the kind of approach to children's learning and development that is in keeping with the ethos of the nursery. Some staff who are studying for higher qualifications share their knowledge and study to drive further improvement. For example, a project is developing to extend the opportunities for children to engage in further adventurous activities to encourage their confidence and calculated risk taking in the natural environment. The success of this commitment to training is borne out by comments from parents who express deep appreciation and satisfaction with the progress their children make. These include comments, such as, 'You have shown care and dedication to our children, helped to equip them with confidence and skills to succeed in the next chapter of their lives', and, 'we truly believe you have given children one of the best starts in education we could have asked for'.

Parents views and comments are sought at various steps along their children's time in the nursery. This includes seeking further comments when children have left to go to school and management uses the information to support planning for further improvement. Management also seeks feedback from some of the schools children go on to, using the data extremely well in order to ascertain how effective and accurate staff are assessing children's progress. The process of self-evaluation involves all concerned with the children's care, learning and development, including additional professionals and agencies who may support individual children specifically. As one parent states, 'the nursery is part of our family'.

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	253814
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	967135
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	50
Number of children on roll	75
Name of provider	Merryvale Nursery Ltd
Date of previous inspection	24/02/2011
Telephone number	0121 422 7025

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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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