

Smallworld Pre-School

Ashfield Infant School, Newlands Lane, WORKINGTON, Cumbria, CA14 3JG

Inspection date	01/04/2014
Previous inspection date	11/01/2011

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 develop a strong sense of belonging through the secure attachments established with their key person, and the other staff who work in the pre-school. As a result, they are happy and settled in this relaxed, calm and welcoming environment.
- There are good partnerships between the children's key person, parent/carers and other professionals. As a result, children's continuing care and learning is promoted very well.
- There are good opportunities for children to work individually or in small and large groups, to make choices and decisions, work cooperatively and develop their independence and social skills. Staff are deployed effectively and they provide well targeted support for all children, in order that they can achieve as much as they can.
- Staff know the children's individual needs and plan a wide range of interesting and challenging activities, to support the next steps in their learning. As a result of this and taking into account children's starting points, children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Occasionally, staff do not offer children enough time to fully consider and think through their responses to questions, to enhance their learning.
- Opportunities for children to use reclaimed and open-ended materials have not been fully maximised.

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 children playing in the pre-school rooms, outdoor classroom and outdoor play area.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, the staff and the children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and lead practitioner.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents of the early years children attending the setting who were spoken to on the day of the inspection and from information included in the setting's own parent survey.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, the planning documentation, and the systems for the monitoring of children's progress.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, the policies and procedures for the setting, and the documented self-evaluation systems that support the service.

Inspector

Carys Millican

Full report

Information about the setting

Smallworld Pre-School opened in 2003 and is privately owned and managed by Smallworld Pre-School and Link Club Ltd. It operates from a modular, self-contained building within the grounds of Ashfield Infant School in Workington, Cumbria. It serves the immediate locality and also the surrounding areas. The pre-school opens five days a week from 8am until 6pm, during term time and includes a before and after school club. Children attend for a variety of sessions. They are cared for in two inner rooms, an outdoor classroom play area and associated facilities including kitchen and toilets. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 64 children in the early years age range on roll. The pre-school receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

There are currently 12 staff employed at the pre-school. Of these 12 hold an appropriate early years qualification, including the manager. One staff member holds Early Years Professional Status and three staff members hold Foundation Degrees in Early Years. The remaining eight staff all have qualifications at level 3. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority. The pre-school is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- provide more opportunities for children to respond to the questions asked of them by supporting all staff to give children time to think

- provide more opportunities for children to develop and use their imagination through the use of resources which could be used for a range of purposes.

Inspection judgements

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

The manager and staff have a good understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They know the children's individual needs well and adapt their teaching methods to accommodate children's different learning styles. Children are provided with engaging activities that capture their interest, curiosity

and imagination. At the point of registration and during the settling-in period, each child's key person gathers a wealth of information about what children can do from their parents. In addition, key staff observe the child at play in the pre-school. This information is used to promote children's continuing care and learning and to further develop their next learning experiences. Children's development books are attractively laid out and well maintained by their key person. Each book contains all the information ready to share with parents about how well their child is progressing in their learning. The tracking takes into account children's starting points and other considerations. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities have one-to-one support from a member of staff who carefully tracks and supports their progress. Parents are encouraged to use blank progress sheets to observe and record what their children do at home. During 'sharing sessions', parents share this information with their child's key person, enabling them to support children's interests and build a more comprehensive picture of their all-round development. The ongoing assessments of the children are routinely maintained and they clearly identify where each child is in their typical age range of development. Staff confidently identify the next steps in children learning and build on children's interest to further promote their development. For example, staff record children's achievements and new interests on clip boards placed in appropriate areas throughout the pre-school. This information is used to inform the planning for further activities and future play opportunities for children. As a result, children are actively involved in activities that interest them and their concentration is maintained.

Staff have high expectations of what children can achieve and they provide them with a wide range of stimulating and imaginative learning experiences. This helps to motivate and engage children more in the activities they enjoy taking part in. For example, children enjoy dressing up so staff ensure resources are available to support this interest. Staff provide opportunities for children to develop their own play. For example, while playing in the water tray with a selection of sea creatures, the children decide to make the water more like the seaside. The staff member asks the children how they can do this and asks them to think about what they see at the seaside and in the sea. The children decide to add sea shells and pebbles into the water. They work together to collect the different materials and place them carefully into the water tray. They are pleased with what they have achieved and say to the member of staff, that it 'now looks like the sea'. Children enjoy making the modelling dough. The staff effectively support children's experiences by making sure that all the ingredients are accessible and stored in clear plastic containers in the craft area. The children know exactly what they need and mix together the ingredients. The staff watch and only intervene to help them when and if help is required. Staff continuously support and reinforce early language and social skills through age-appropriate conversations and open-ended questioning techniques. For example, they ask, 'What sound does a fire engine make? How many caterpillars can you see? What happens when they eat all the food?' Staff introduce new words and engage the children in conversations and as a result, children are supported in the acquisition of communication and language skills and in their physical, personal, social and emotional development. Although most staff make good use of open-ended questions, at times, they do not allow children the time they need to respond before stepping in with an answer. This means that occasionally, children are not fully encouraged to think deeply and consider their answers before responding. Children's self-help skills are effectively promoted and older children are introduced to early phonics and supported in developing their letter

recognition and writing skills. As a result, children are well prepared for their next stages in learning.

Partnerships with parents and carers are good. The staff work hard to ensure that a shared approach to children's learning is achieved at every opportunity. Parents' views and thoughts are respected and valued. As a result, parents feel fully included in all aspects of their child's learning. Parents provide photographs of family members for displays and staff provide them with information about how to continue to help their children at home and how parents can contribute to the topics introduced to the children. The open-door policy ensures that parents feel welcome to communicate with the staff at any time. Parents regularly review children's assessments and development records with their child's key person at sharing sessions and enjoy the play days promoted by the staff. Parents contribute to children's records by carrying out observations of their children at home, so their assessments complement the next steps in their child's learning. Parental discussions are recorded and followed up immediately. For example, staff understand the importance of continuity when toilet training young children and make sure that they work with the parents to help children gain this skill.

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

Children are happy and contented. Their emotional well-being is fostered well within the warm, welcoming, and relaxed environment. This is because the staff are calm, kind, caring and sensitive in supporting children's individual needs and provide a tailored settling-in process to help children to settle as easily as possible. As a result, children form secure emotional attachments with their key person and other staff members because they soon feel at home, and feel safe and secure. Children become more and more confident through the support they receive from kind and caring staff who help them to establish positive relationships with their peers. A wealth of children's work is displayed throughout the pre-school and this ensures that children develop a strong sense of belonging and feel proud of their achievements. Children demonstrate good levels of independence and, as a result, are well prepared for their future move on to school. For example, children see to their own personal hygiene, learn to dress and undress themselves by putting on coats and doing up shoes, and at mealtimes they pour themselves a drink and empty their leftover waste into the bin. Healthy eating is effectively promoted. The pre-school snacks and lunches are healthy and nutritious. Learning opportunities are further promoted during these practical routines as children competently find their name card before sitting down and deciding what they would like to eat. Staff work well as a team to provide children with a warm, welcoming, exciting and stimulating learning environment. Children are provided with a wide range of indoor and outdoor resources to successfully capture their enthusiasm for learning. However, reclaimed and open-ended materials that children can use, move and combine in a variety of ways, are not fully embraced. This means that opportunities for them to play and further explore using their imagination and creativity is less well promoted. Staff plan a number of activities related to different cultural festivals and events throughout the year. A range of colourful displays that promote positive visual images of difference and diversity used to build on children's awareness and acceptance of others is well promoted.

Children's physical well-being is encouraged through a range of indoor and outdoor activities. They have good access to fresh air and opportunities for physical play and exercise. For example, children ride wheeled toys and play ball games which help them strengthen their leg and arm muscles. The outdoor classroom and reception area is created by staff to support children's play and learning. There is a wealth of information displayed for parents and carers, which keeps them fully informed about the Early Years Foundation Stage and how their children learn. The covered outdoor classroom enables children to play outside in all weathers. During each session children can free flow into this area as it is an integral part of the provision. Staff are deployed well to support children's needs, while allowing them to take well managed risks. For example, staff watch children in small groups outside and remain close at hand as children navigate climbing frames and steps to the slide. Children practise and develop their climbing and balancing skills. They confidently manage risks and develop an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. Staff skilfully manage children's behaviour. They remind children to be kind to each other and use positive messages to maintain good behaviour with all children. Staff are good role models. They interact well with parents at arrival and collection times and make them feel at home. Staff consistently praise children and show sustained interest in children's development and achievements. They create a culture of enthusiasm and encouragement, therefore, children engage in active, stimulating play opportunities where they demonstrate good levels of independence and self-motivation. Children learn to respect each other and play well together. They are well mannered and always say 'please' and 'thank you'. Children have a good understanding of the rules and boundaries of the setting and consistently demonstrate positive behaviour and attitudes. Children enjoy circle time activities where they learn to take turns to share their thoughts and views with the other children and the staff. For example, each child waits patiently while a clear plastic container is passed round so each of them can look closely and carefully at the five caterpillars inside it.

Staff effectively support children who are moving on to school. They invite the new into the pre-school, read stories about going to school, and create photographic books and cards, so children become familiar with the changes to their environment and routine. The staff team has established good links with the local host school and specialist school in the locality, and as a result, children move smoothly into their next setting. Teachers visit before children start school to observe them as they play and talk to staff about children's individual needs. Staff complete summaries of children's progress and share them with parents, carers and teachers before children leave. Children also visit their selected school before the end of the summer term which enables them to become more familiar with their new environment. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are introduced to their new setting by their key person, so that they feel safe and secure and well prepared for their future move on to school. As a result, children are well supported as they move from one setting to another.

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

The manager and staff team at the pre-school have a very good understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. For example,

the policies and procedures in place are well written, regularly reviewed and changes are implemented swiftly to ensure the continued smooth running of the pre-school. Policies and procedures are well implemented and clearly help to underpin the good childcare practice and service provided for children, parents and carers. All staff have a good understanding of child protection and keeping children safe from harm. They fully understand their individual responsibilities with regard to safeguarding children, and this includes robust selection, recruitment and vetting procedures, and the close supervision of visitors and students. The staff's understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements are secure; safe practice is firmly embedded and children play in a safe, warm, welcoming and supportive environment. All records are maintained in detail, such as complaints records and children's information, to support children and their families.

The manager and her deputy lead by example and they work closely together with the staff team. Their continued pursuit of excellence is evident through regular reviews, self-evaluation and through the action and improvement plans in place. These are instrumental in monitoring, identifying and prioritising aspects of the provision to be developed and to bring about sustained improvements. An example of this is the implementation of revised observational and assessment progress records that are completed by key persons and discussed with parents at sharing sessions. Staff are deployed effectively. They provide well-targeted support for all children, in order that they achieve as much as they can in all areas of learning. The quality of teaching is good because staff know their children well and clearly understand how children learn. The staff team are enthusiastic in their work. They are experienced and skilled practitioners who regularly attend additional training provided by the local authority and completed in-house. They keep their skills and knowledge up to date and this has a positive impact on children's well-being because staff implement what they learn in the setting. For example, the recent in-house training refreshed staff's knowledge and understanding of how children learn and was linked to many notable theorists. The manager and staff are all highly committed practitioners, who have a good understanding of all the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They implement them effectively to ensure that all children make good progress in their learning through a range of stimulating, exciting and challenging activities. The recommendations made at the last inspection has been successfully implemented, further promoting children's health, care, learning and development.

Effective partnerships with parents, local schools, education, health and specialist support services, are a significant aspect of the pre-school's success. Staff value the contribution made by parents to their child's learning and development. Parents are welcomed into the setting and encouraged to stay to settle their child and promote hourly visits during morning and afternoon sessions to help children feel at ease and become more familiar with the staff and pre-school routine. Parents' views are actively sought and positive comments in parent questionnaires show that the pre-school's contribution to the learning, care and development of their children is highly valued. The staff engage with parents at every level to ensure that children are happy, settled and progress well towards the early learning goals. Parents are kept fully informed of their children's learning and development through daily discussion, and regular sharing sessions where they review their children's progress with their key person and decide children's next steps together. As a result, a shared approach to children's learning is fully embraced. Staff act on advice from visiting professionals to implement individual programmes of support for children. This ensures

that all children make good progress and gaps are closing. Positive links are established and maintained between the nursery and local mainstream and specialist schools in the locality. These partnerships contribute positively to children's learning and development and the whole transition process. Partnerships with external agencies are well established to ensure intervention is secured swiftly when required and further opportunities to share information between settings are implemented to ensure consistency in care, teaching and learning.

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	EY267912
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	960328
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	30
Number of children on roll	64
Name of provider	Smallworld Pre-School and Link Club Ltd
Date of previous inspection	11/01/2011
Telephone number	01900 873973

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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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