

Fern Hollow Day Nursery

4 Birches Nook Road, STOCKSFIELD, Northumberland, NE43 7PA

Inspection date	04/04/2014
Previous inspection date	20/12/2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	3
	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		3
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision requires improvement

- Children settle well, quickly forming strong bonds with key persons and others. They are confident with the routine of the day and understand the expectations of positive behaviour.
- Children are excited, enthusiastic and happy. They enjoy the very wide range of activities on offer, particularly in the outside environment, which challenges and stimulates them.
- Staff use their knowledge, skills and experience very effectively, ensuring that children are consistently challenged to reach the next stage in their development.

It is not yet good because

- The provider failed to notify Ofsted of a safeguarding issue. This is a breach of requirements.
- Staff do not always ensure that the youngest children adopt appropriate hygiene before meals. As a result, children's health and well-being is compromised.
- There is scope to improve and enhance older children's independence skills. For example, by serving themselves at lunch time.

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 viewed all areas of the premises and equipment, and observed activities in the playrooms and the outside play areas.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, planning documentation, evidence of suitability of staff working within the setting, the provider's self-evaluation form and a range of other documentation.
- The inspector held meetings with the deputy manager, completed a joint observation with the manager, and spoke with staff and children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Eileen Grimes

Full report

Information about the setting

Fern Hollow Nursery was registered in May 2005. In April 2008 it was taken over by the current owners. It is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is situated in a converted building in the Stocksfield area of Northumberland. The group serves the local community. It operates from three areas and there is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 and above, including two with Early Years Professional Status. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 82 children attending, of whom all 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.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure that the youngest children adopt appropriate hygiene before meals. For example by ensuring that hand washing practices are adopted at these times
- develop further, older children's independence skills. For example by serving themselves at lunch time.

Inspection judgements

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

The well-qualified staff team has a good understanding of the Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching is generally good, with a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities, so that children make expected progress in their learning. For example, babies enjoy a planned group singing activity, as they choose items from the bag and sing a corresponding song. Older children engage together with a member of staff in building robots from boxes, finding the boxes required and then fitting them together. Children also freely choose what they want to play with from the continuous provision in all rooms. For example, babies play with musical toys. Toddlers build a tower with the wooden bricks and are encouraged to count them, while all children enjoy a wide variety of creative activities, the emphasis being on the process not the end product. Talking is a consistently strong aspect of the provision and staff model younger children's language, repeating it back to them. Staff also effectively enhance children's knowledge of letters and sounds. They make good use of open-ended questions to encourage children to think, and, as a result, children hold extended conversations with staff, and staff always use appropriate language with children. This has a positive impact on children's

communication and language skills. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported, as staff make every effort to speak familiar words from home. This develops children's confidence and has a positive impact on their progress.

Staff create a warm, caring and nurturing environment; as a result, children are happy, settled and confident. They move around the rooms with self-assurance, concentrate for good periods of time and behave well. The indoor and outdoor environment is rich in print. Children successfully recognise their names on cups and name cards. They actively look at books together and demonstrate good habits in enjoying books. Pre-school children begin to write their own name independently, while younger children develop good pre-writing skills. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is progressing well, through walks in the locality and outings into the local community. They effectively learn about other cultures through exploring different festivals. In the outdoor areas children use the wide range of equipment, as they climb on the climbing frame, pedal bicycles, manipulate stilts and play in the 'house'. Regular access to the outdoors ensures children's physical skills are developing well. Staff ensure all children are fully included in daily activities.

The nursery gains good information on children's starting points through 'care plans', which are completed by parents on induction. These are followed up by staff observations. At the end of the first month parents receive an 'initial monthly report', which includes next steps for learning and development. This forms the start of their 'Learning Journey.' Staff carry out observations and take photographs of children, which are used to complete their progress reports. The reports bring together their progress over the last three months and contain one, two or three next steps for the following three-month period. It also gives parents an idea of what they can do at home to help their child. These next steps are included in the planning for each child. This system ensures that learning experiences are consistently planned, to ensure children make the best possible progress. There are good partnerships with parents. They contribute to their children's learning by sharing achievements and interests from home. As a result, parents feel involved in their child's learning. The progress check at age two is completed and a written summary is shared with parents. Parents feel that they are well informed, on a daily basis, of their children's achievements through verbal conversations and information in the child's daily diary. Overall, children are gaining the necessary skills to support their future learning, and are gaining the skills and confidence they need to be ready for the next stage in their learning or when they start school.

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

Children are well settled in the nursery and have made secure attachments to their key person. Staff know children very well and understand the importance of having positive relationships with parents. A two-way flow of information between home and the setting, supported by a daily diary, means that staff are aware of children's routines, dietary requirements and general care needs. As a result, children's individual needs are met and parents and staff work closely together to provide consistency of care. Effective systems are in place to ensure the children experience a smooth transition as they become ready for school or they move up through the nursery rooms. For example, children and parents

are well prepared for transitions as the effective key persons share information about each child with parents, other key persons or teachers and the nursery. Children are gradually introduced to their new room over a two-week period as they make the transition. Children who attend more than one setting are supported by a 'communication' book to ensure each setting is aware of the child's individual needs and progress.

Fresh food is cooked on site, providing healthy choices for the children, which reflect their cultural and dietary needs. Younger children are supported to feed themselves independently and a spoon is available if necessary. Babies feed themselves with a spoon and adult support is available if necessary. All this encourages independence and choice. However, opportunities are not always available for older children to develop further these independence skills through serving themselves at lunch time. Healthy lifestyles are promoted through activities with the children, such as physical exercise and discussion about what foods are good for you. Children follow the routines well in managing their personal care. Babies are strapped into high chairs at meal and snack times, and older children learn to sit properly on chairs while playing at the tables or having their meals. However, staff do not always follow good hygiene practices with the youngest children. For example, hands are not always washed before snacks and meals. Staff explain to children why it is important to help tidy away toys at tidy-up time. Staff follow good hygiene routines when changing nappies. This is a positive and rewarding experience for the children. They receive good interactions as staff talk and sing to them throughout the procedure. The nursery rooms and toilets are kept clean and staff regularly disinfect plastic baby toys throughout the day after they have been in babies' mouths, promoting hygiene and helping to prevent cross-infection.

Staff provide a calm and caring environment for the children where they feel safe and start to become aware of others around them. They encourage the children in their play and learning to build their self-assurance. The children's participation in group activities encourages them to share and take turns. Children are well supervised at all times and staff are well deployed throughout the setting. As a result, children's behaviour is generally good. Outdoor play areas are used well and playing outside is incorporated into children's daily activities. This helps children enhance their large muscle skills and enjoy time outside in the fresh air while exercising. From a young age children learn about keeping safe as they regularly participate in emergency evacuation drills. This helps them understand what to do should they need to leave the setting quickly. Children learn about taking risks as they engage in different experiences. For example, they learn to carefully use scissors to cut the paper to stick on their pictures. Children's work is displayed prominently throughout in the setting, making them feel valued and acknowledged. The entrance area contains a wealth of information for parents, and photographs of children and their families help all children and their families to have a sense of belonging. Regular newsletters keep parents informed of forthcoming events. Parents' comments include statements such as, 'He seems happy and has come on a lot' and 'Brilliant feedback at the end of every day'.

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

This inspection was brought forward as the provider failed to notify Ofsted of a safeguarding event. This is a breach of the legal requirements. However, on this occasion the failure to inform was caused by a communication error; the manager and staff show that they have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The manager and staff understand their responsibility in safeguarding children and have effective policies and procedures in place, which are implemented to ensure children are kept safe at all times. This minimises the risks to children. The thorough induction and training programme ensures all staff know and understand procedures to follow should they have any concerns and know who to contact and how to keep children safe. There are clear procedures in place for the use of cameras and mobile phones. Permission is obtained from parents for the staff to take photographs of children. There is a daily record of risk assessment checks, which are carried out in both the indoor and outdoor environment. Nappy changing routines are effective, children are treated with respect and kindness at all times and any toileting accidents are dealt with sensitively. Staff record children's food intake in their daily diaries and individual children's preferences and food likes and dislikes are well catered for. The on-site cook prepares separate dishes for children with dietary requirements or for individual children who have specific food preferences. Staff follow a consistent behaviour management policy and staff demonstrate a sound understanding of how to implement behaviour management strategies. Children are spoken to calmly, staff explain that they have to be kind and share with their friends and they are encouraged to say sorry. The nursery is well maintained and clean.

The management team demonstrate a secure knowledge of the learning and development requirements. They are making significant ongoing improvements to analyse the progress children are making across the nursery. As a result, the nursery is able to identify ways to improve practice for the benefit of the children. For example, the nursery has started collating children's tracking information and has begun to look at differences between groups of children. Local authority quality assurance audits are used as a basis for the self-evaluation process. These provide an overview of the nursery's strengths and weaknesses. The manager seeks the views of parents, staff and children as part of the self-evaluation process, and this is achieved through parent consultation, staff meetings and children's evaluations of their learning. The manager has successfully addressed the recommendations from previous inspections.

The manager successfully monitors staff performance and their contributions to the nursery through regular team meetings and reviewing staff record keeping and appraisals. As a result, staff identify areas for development to help improve practice. All staff receive supervision, which provides a source of support, training and professional development. Training is seen as a priority and staff are supported to gain further relevant childcare qualifications. This ensures all members of the staff become valued members of the team. Training is effectively shared with staff through feedback sessions at team meetings. The impact of training on practice is then evaluated by the manager through the performance management system. Partnerships with parents are positive and support children's learning and development. Parents are complimentary about the nursery and say they find staff approachable and friendly. Parents are encouraged to spend time in the nursery and always feel welcome. They receive a range of information about their children's progress as well as about the operation of the nursery in general. Regular parents' evenings enable parents to discuss the children's learning and development with their child's key person.

Partnerships with external agencies involved in supporting children's care and education are good. There are well-established links with other external agencies, in particular the speech therapist. Links with local schools have been strengthened and pre-school children enjoy visits to the local school prior to starting.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are	Met
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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	EY308455
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	965630
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	82
Name of provider	Fern Hollow Limited
Date of previous inspection	20/12/2011
Telephone number	01661 842717

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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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