

Ferndene Nursery

64 Elton Parade, Darlington, County Durham, DL3 8PQ

Inspection date	19/06/2014
Previous inspection date	09/12/2008

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
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

- The quality of teaching is outstanding as staff provide children with a rich variety of challenging and interesting learning experiences. As a result, children make rapid progress from their starting points.
- Extremely successful strategies are in place to ensure parents are actively involved in children's learning and development. This promotes a collaborative approach to meet the individual needs of children, both in the setting and at home.
- Children are happy, secure and settled within the highly stimulating nursery environment. They show excellent levels of confidence and independence as they are motivated and eager to learn.
- Staff have well-established links with local primary schools, external agencies and other professionals, preparing children extremely well for the next stage in their learning. Consequently, transitions are very well managed to support the children's emotional well-being.
- Leadership within the nursery is inspirational. The management team and staff continually monitor and evaluate the provision to ensure sustained improvement over time, supporting children's high levels of achievement.
- Staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Detailed policies and procedures are successfully implemented to ensure a safe environment for the 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 viewed all areas accessed by the children including the outdoor environment.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector observed play and learning opportunities for the children and spoke to staff members in the nursery rooms.
- The inspector carried out an interview with the manager and provider, and looked at and discussed a range of policies and procedures.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, the provider's self-evaluation form and improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day of inspection.

Inspector

Rachel Enright

Full report

Information about the setting

Ferndene Nursery opened in 1987 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is located in Darlington and is managed by a private limited childcare company. The nursery operates from seven playrooms, within a large house, purpose built baby unit and a converted coaching house. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery employs 23 members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including two staff members with Early Years Professional Status and four staff members with Qualified Teacher Status. The nursery receives support from the local authority. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 8am until 5.30pm, for 51 weeks of the year. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 123 children on roll who are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and 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:

- continue to extend the already excellent systems for monitoring and evaluation of teaching practice, for example, by introducing peer observations, so that children's progress is maximised to the optimum.

Inspection judgements

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

The quality and consistency of teaching is outstanding, as staff successfully support and promote the children's development across all seven areas of learning. The highly skilled and committed staff team provide children with a rich and varied range of educational programmes to meet their individual interests and needs. Staff effectively use their knowledge to enhance and extend children's learning, which ensures they are actively engaged and motivated within their activities. For example, children are learning about different types of animals, leading to a parent providing resources from a veterinary surgery where they work. The children show great excitement and enthusiasm as they try on the safety clothing, play with the different bandages and use the toothbrushes to clean the toy animal's teeth. Staff use this opportunity to develop the children's communication and language development exceptionally well as they engage in constant discussion, ask open-ended questions and use additional resources to sustain the children's curiosity and critical thinking. Detailed planning systems are used to deliver a superb balance of adult-led and child-initiated experiences, which are highly challenging and interesting for the children. This means children are eager to learn and show high levels of concentration

throughout their play. As a result, all children make rapid progress in their learning and development, from their starting points. Staff complete precise and thorough observations and assessments, which show they have extremely high expectations of the children. These documents are used to recognise the children's achievements, identify their next steps in learning and develop future planning. Robust tracking systems are in place to highlight the children's progress, ensuring children who are at risk of falling below their expected levels of development, are identified quickly and receive appropriate intervention. Parents are fully involved in the children's learning and development, as staff promote the importance of a collaborative approach to meet the individual needs of the children. There are highly successful strategies in place to engage parents, ensuring continuity of care and learning, both within the nursery and at home. For example, staff hold regular workshops for parents, to keep them informed about different aspects of the nursery, including the Early Years Foundation Stage and schemas. This is further promoted as parents attend discovery days, where they play alongside the children and receive resource cards to offer activity suggestions for the home environment. Parents are also given regular opportunities to review the children's electronic learning journey records, and are given relevant feedback at the end of each session. Consequently, parents feel valued and respected as they are kept well informed and consulted.

Children show excellent levels of confidence and independence within the highly stimulating nursery environment. They are clearly comfortable in their surroundings, and have access to an extensive range of high quality resources, which are easily accessible to enable them to participate in purposeful play. Staff effectively promote the children's physical development, encouraging them to explore, investigate and take appropriate risks. There is a high importance placed on 'learning through nature' within the nursery, and some staff members have recently attended Forest Schools training, ensuring the outdoor environment is used to facilitate the children's different learning styles. Children have access to an exceptional variety of open-ended resources in the outdoor area to develop their physical and social skills. For example, they enjoy playing in the woodland, where they hunt for mini-beasts, climb and balance on the tree trunks, and use a selection of crates and ropes to make an obstacle course. This is further supported for the younger children as babies take part in 'tummy time' sessions, which are used to increase their motor skills, movement and coordination. Children have numerous opportunities to develop their early writing and reading skills to promote their literacy development. For example, younger children are involved in sensory play, where they make marks in different textures such as paint, foam and baked beans. Older children enjoy listening to stories, write their names and take part in group time, where they recognise different letters and sounds. Children's mathematical development is successfully supported, as staff introduce counting and number language throughout the children's activities. Younger children fill and empty a selection of containers during water play while older children confidently count up to 10, and identify different colours and shapes. Culture and diversity is promoted very well by staff as they provide the children with opportunities to explore different festivals, such as Eid, Diwali and The Three Kings. This is further extended as the older children are visited by a French teacher on a weekly basis, where they learn greetings, songs, numbers and colours in the language. As a result, children are highly supported to effectively acquire the skills needed to be ready for school.

The nursery has successfully implemented the progress check for children between the

age of two and three years. This information is shared with parents and gives a thorough overview of the children's progress in the prime areas of learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language are extremely well supported as staff work closely with parents and external agencies to ensure their individual needs are being met. For example, staff have established close relationships with other professionals, such as speech and language therapists, and inclusion officers to ensure effective strategies are in place to support the children in their learning and development. The nursery also has strong links with local primary schools and other early years providers, as they share relevant information and work in partnership to complement the children's learning. Consequently, children are fully supported in their all-round development and future transitions are very well managed. This ensures the children are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

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

Children are clearly happy, secure and settled within the inspiring nursery. The indoor and outdoor environments are extremely well-resourced and highly stimulating, for children to be active in their learning and development. The robust key-person system helps children to form highly secure attachments and develop strong relationships with staff and each other. As a result, children demonstrate exceptional skills in their personal, social and emotional development as they have an excellent sense of belonging and feel self-assured. This successfully supports the children's emotional well-being. There are effective settling-in procedures for children starting at the nursery, ensuring they feel comfortable and confident in their new environment. Transitions within the nursery are also very well managed and implemented, ensuring children are emotionally prepared for change. Staff actively involve the parents throughout the transition period, as they share relevant information about the children to support their individual learning and care needs. Parents spoken to at the time of inspection comment that the nursery experience is very positive, as they are asked to give regular feedback and are provided with suggestions to support the children with their learning at home.

Staff act as positive role models as they effectively manage the children's behaviour, dependant on their age and stage of development. They use a number of successful techniques to reinforce appropriate behaviour and teach children that their actions have consequences. This ensures children have a strong understanding of the boundaries and expectations within the nursery. Regular praise and encouragement is used by staff to ensure the children feel valued and appreciated. Staff encourage children to use good manners and to be kind, polite and considerate to each other as they play. Children's behaviour is exceptionally good because they are consistently absorbed and interested in their learning. Staff use constant reassurance and reinforcement throughout the children's activities, ensuring they develop an excellent awareness of keeping themselves and others safe. For example, children are reminded to use the scissors correctly and encouraged to negotiate space while they play in the outdoor area. Safety is further promoted as the nursery take part in road safety events, and children receive visits from the local fire brigade, police and lollipop lady.

Children are encouraged to be independent learners and take responsibility, throughout their daily routines. For example, children access their own resources to self-initiate their play and help with tasks during mealtimes. The nursery provides a varied range of balanced and nutritious meals and snacks, developing the children's understanding of a healthy diet and lifestyle. Staff regularly talk to the children about healthy eating, and implement effective procedures to cater for individual dietary requirements, allergies and medical conditions. Children sit well together as a group during mealtimes, and staff engage in constant discussion which successfully promotes their communication and language skills. There are thorough hygiene practices implemented within the nursery, ensuring the children start to develop an awareness of their own health and well-being. This also effectively promotes children's self-care skills as they manage their own personal needs, such as toileting and washing their hands. Staff provide vast opportunities for children to be physically active, develop their coordination skills and take appropriate risks. For example, children enjoy an extensive range of play activities in the outdoor environment, where they show delight as they use the climbing frame and balance along the tree logs.

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

Staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Robust and detailed policies and procedures are successfully implemented within the nursery, ensuring an extremely safe and secure environment for children. All staff have completed relevant safeguarding training and know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns. For example, safeguarding books are provided within each nursery room for staff to record any issues or worries. Thorough written risk assessments are completed, for both the indoor and outdoor environments, to ensure they are free from hazards and to minimise the risk of harm. Health and safety is further promoted through visual checks, fire evacuations and annual audits completed by an external company. This ensures that children's welfare is exceptionally well protected. Staff are deployed well within the nursery, and supervise the children effectively to maintain their safety and well-being. Rigorous recruitment, induction and vetting procedures are in place to ensure that staff are suitably trained, experienced and qualified to work with children. The management team have extremely high expectations of staff, ensuring they are dedicated and committed to their role and responsibilities.

Leadership within the nursery is inspirational. The management team and staff are passionate and enthusiastic, as they strive to provide high quality care and education for the children and their families. They share a strong vision for the nursery to promote the best possible outcomes and maintain the already exceptional standard. The management team use effective monitoring systems to evaluate the planning systems, children's learning journey records and the educational programmes. Staff are confident to reflect on their daily practice, leading to sustained and continuous improvement over time. All staff are extremely well supported, as the management team complete highly effective supervisions, appraisals and observations to promote their professional and personal development. This is further enhanced as each staff member has an individual

improvement plan and training record, encouraging them to develop their confidence and be proactive within their own work. As a result, staff are actively encouraged to continually develop their skills, knowledge and understanding. There is now scope to extend the already excellent systems for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching practice, by introducing peer observations, so that children's progress is maximised to the optimum. Self-evaluation is thorough and takes into account the views of staff, children and parents. This enables the management team to focus on priorities for future development, supporting children's exceptional progress and high levels of achievement. The recommendations following the last inspection have all been successfully addressed.

Partnerships with parents are a significant strength of the nursery. Staff have established excellent relationships with parents, and constantly consult and involve them in the children's learning and development. Parents are extremely well-informed as they receive daily communication, regular newsletters and questionnaires. There are an outstanding range of parent boards within the nursery to ensure they are provided with high quality information. Parents are highly complimentary of the nursery, and make comments, such as 'staff are supportive and friendly, my child has progressed well' and 'I have peace of mind when leaving my children'. The nursery works extremely well with the local authority, external agencies and other professionals to ensure that children receive the appropriate intervention to meet their individual requirements. Staff also have well-established links with the local primary schools, further supporting the children's learning and promoting effective transitions.

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	508025
Local authority	Darlington
Inspection number	869335
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	78
Number of children on roll	123
Name of provider	Great Little Childcare Company Limited
Date of previous inspection	09/12/2008
Telephone number	01325 468774

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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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