

Rascals Preschool Nursery

Community Centre, Caldbeck Road, WHITEHAVEN, Cumbria, CA28 6XQ

Inspection date

25/06/2014

Previous inspection date

15/11/2011

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

- The quality of teaching is good. Children are active learners who have good opportunities to explore and investigate in their play. Practitioners interact well with children and through the uses of good teaching methods support their critical thinking and problem solving skills.
- Key-person arrangements are effective because practitioners develop close and secure relationships with children, parents and carers. As a result, children settle easily in to this welcoming environment.
- Children are well-behaved. They feel at ease in the well-organised, relaxed and welcoming environment, where practitioners creatively display children's work. As a result, children's sense of belonging and emotional well-being is effectively met.
- Practitioners have a good understanding of their role and responsibilities for safeguarding children. As a result, safe practices are in place to ensure children's safety at all times.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Practical routines and activities are not used to maximum effect to enhance children's independence and mathematical experiences.
- There is scope to enhance children's awareness of each other's similarities and differences to further support their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

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.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children playing in the main playroom.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, staff and children throughout both sessions.
- The inspector discussed the activities observed during the inspection 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.
- 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

Rascals Preschool Nursery opened in 1994 on the Early Years Register. It is managed by a voluntary committee and operates from a designated community centre building, located between three residential housing estates on the outskirts of Whitehaven, Cumbria. The nursery serves the immediate locality and also the surrounding areas. It opens five days a week, from 8.45am until 11.45am and 12noon until 3pm, during term times only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children are cared for in one playroom with associated facilities. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 68 children in the early years age range on roll. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. The nursery supports children who speak English as an additional language. There are currently seven practitioners employed at the nursery, of whom six work directly with children. All six hold an appropriate early years qualification at level 3. The nursery is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and 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:

- enhance the use of practical routines throughout the day, to incorporate additional opportunities to enable children to practise and further develop their independence, mathematics and literacy skills
- enhance children's awareness of each other's similarities and differences to strengthen their understanding of diversity and support their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

Inspection judgements

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

Practitioners are very caring. They take the time to get to know each child as an individual, so that they offer them the most appropriate and relevant support and activities. As a result, children are enthusiastic about their play, engaged in their learning and have a positive approach in all that they do. This ensures that they are well-prepared for when they start school. All children make good progress in their learning because teaching methods match children's individual needs. Practitioners have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They establish a close relationship with parents to gather all the required information about their children, the family background and any additional needs. This enables practitioners to complete a full assessment of children's starting points at registration. This information is then used to inform the planning and to help with the monitoring of children's progress. Practitioners

fully value parents' ongoing role in their child's learning. They speak with them at arrival and collection times, constantly encouraging them to share updates about their children. For example, they approach parents to ask them about children's achievements at home and provide them with written progress reports throughout the year. Achievements are discussed and celebrated with children and used by key persons to update progress records. Parents are supported well to extend children's learning at home, especially where gaps are noted and concern is expressed. For example, practitioners support parents whose children have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They work together with other professionals to help children improve in their development and to reach their full potential before starting school.

Children are supported in developing the necessary skills for effective learning. Their self-esteem and confidence is supported well in all that they do. Children develop a sense of belonging because their art work is creatively displayed all over the pre-school room, so they feel proud of their most recent artwork and can look back on past achievements. Good interaction helps children to develop their language and communication skills and helps them to solve simple problems. For example, a practitioner joins in a game of dominoes with a group of children. They listen to her as she explains the rules of the game, so that they know how to play. Children learn to take turns and wait patiently. They look at the dominoes they have to see if they match the ones placed on the floor. The practitioner skilfully supports younger children by asking them what fruit they can see or can they match the colour, which helps them to successfully take part. She encourages them to talk throughout the game and asks older children to help younger ones. The practitioner sensitively introduces words and vocabulary, such as, top, bottom, side, beside, and prompts children to use these words during their game. She encourages them to count the number dominoes they have and asks them why they get less when more children join in. Thoughtful daily procedures help children to settle and to extend their social and communication skills. For example, on arrival children find their name card and photograph and take it to their key person. Then once everyone has arrived they complete the register saying 'yes' in a loud voice when they hear their name. All children thoroughly enjoy joining in. Children recall what they did the day before, the topic and adult-led activities available to them. They participate in a balance of child-led and more structured activities that enable them to explore and experiment. For example, children enjoy painting cut-outs of different sea creatures. They competently use brushes and paint to colour in their sea creature and the practitioner assisting them asks them where on their blue coloured paper they would like the sea creature to go. Although children make choices and decisions, their independence is lessened during this activity because the practitioner takes control of the glue and sticks the finished article on to their picture. In addition, practitioners do not always use practical routines throughout the day, to incorporate additional opportunities to enable children to practise and further develop their independence, mathematics and literacy skills. For example, practitioners pour children's drinks and do not enable children to serve their cheese topping at snack time. Practitioners do not encourage counting, comparing and calculating during these routines to fully enhance children's mathematical and literacy skills.

Practitioners observe children as they play. They keep detailed records of children's progress and current interests which they use to inform the planning of children's next steps. The manager and all practitioners are involved in the planning process, which is

displayed on the wall. They support practitioners well in ensuring that children are offered a balanced range of play opportunities that promote each area of learning. Children are offered a wide variety of activities that meet their interest. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well, so that they continue to make good progress. Practitioners work in partnership with families and other professionals, so that they fully understand children's needs and use appropriate methods for supporting them. For example, they make sure that children understand what resources and activities are available and support them in making choices about their play. Children's physical development is promoted well. For example, they enjoy action and movement songs indoors and have a new outdoor play area to access more physical exercise and activities. Children are encouraged to celebrate their own and each other's cultural backgrounds. However, there is scope to further support children's awareness of each other's similarities and differences in the environment and to strengthen their understanding of diversity. For example, by displaying dual language words or pictures in the environment to support children who speak English as an additional language and to encourage all children to recognise the use of other languages in their community.

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

The nursery uses the key-person system well in order to support children and to establish good partnership working with parents. Practitioners help new children to settle as they work closely with parents to develop a settling-in programme that is tailored to each child. This helps to ensure that practitioners know the needs of each child and offer them consistent support. As a result, children are happy and secure and develop good relationships with practitioners. For example, they talk with practitioners about recent events and confidently ask them for help. Practitioners promote children's emotional well-being and social skills. They help them to feel welcome, valued and respected. As a result, they engage well with others, are positive and well-behaved and highly motivated in their play. This helps to ensure they are well-prepared for school and future learning.

Children play in mixed age groups during each session. This means that they learn from each other and they learn to tolerate other's differences and abilities. Careful consideration is given to ensuring that indoor areas are interesting and well-equipped, with a wide variety of accessible resources for children. Children, have numerous opportunities to choose their resources and transport them around the room. Since the last inspection the outdoor play area has been totally refurbished and extended to provide children with a fantastic space to develop their physical skills and to explore and investigate the natural environment. Resources in the outdoor area are suitable for the ages of children attending the preschool and are easily accessible. This enables children to use their imagination and develop their physical skills as they select open-ended play materials, toys and equipment to extend their play to the maximum.

Practitioners are good role models to children. They demonstrate genuine care and show respect for everyone, thereby creating a positive and inclusive environment. Children respond to this and play exceptionally well together. They gain a good understanding of how to manage their own behaviour, This is because practitioners offer them clear

explanations of acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour and provide practical support if required. This is also reflected within the nursery routines. For example, during registration time, children and practitioners talk about being kind, to wait their turn, to listen to others and to be polite by remembering to say 'please and thank you' if they require something. Children are supported well in developing their self-care skills. For example, they remove their own shoes when dressing-up and put them back on before snack time or going home. Children help to tidy up the toys and help at snack time to hand out the plates and beakers. They are offered good opportunities to learn about healthy lifestyles and about their bodies. Children's awareness of healthy eating is extended outside, where they grow their own fruit and vegetables and talk about why these are good for their bodies. Children are also supported well in gaining a thorough understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. For example, they discuss how the fire alarm went off the previous week because the toast burnt and how they all went outside. Practitioners help children to learn to keep themselves safe when outdoors. For example, they understand why it is important to allow space for other children and take turns when using the slide, climbing frame, trampoline and balancing beams.

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

Children's welfare is consistently and effectively promoted because arrangements for safeguarding are known and well-thought through. All practitioners have completed training in this area. They demonstrate a good understanding of the procedures to follow, should they have any concerns about a child or if an allegation is made against them. Robust recruitment procedures and ongoing suitability checks ensure that all practitioners are suitable to work with children. Children's welfare is further promoted through thorough risk assessments to ensure that children play safely in a safe and secure environment. The setting's well-planned daily procedures further promote children's safety. For example, at drop off and collection times the doors are monitored to ensure that children do not leave the premises unsupervised. Exterior doors are secure and cannot be opened by children or parents to gain entry. Visitors to the setting have their identity checked and their attendance is recorded. Managers and practitioners work together to continuously evaluate their work. They seek feedback from parents and invite them to join the committee to represent parents' voices. The evaluation tool and additional development worker review documents help practitioner's to identify their strengths and areas for improvement. All previous recommendations from the last inspection are complete and actions to continue to improve the nursery are well-targeted.

The manager and her team work well together and set high standards for the setting. They have procedures in place to ensure that practitioners are well supported in their work and are given opportunities to attend training that they are interested in. The manager encourages all practitioners to read early years articles and research online websites for the latest information about early years subjects. This has a positive impact on children. For example, practitioners now use new monitoring forms to monitor children's early language and communication skills. Practitioners work well together to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They

review their working practices and the setting's policies in order to check that they are consistently promoting children's health, welfare and development. The manager takes advice from the local authority development workers to improve the setting and practices. She recently obtained additional tracking documents to aid her in monitoring each child's progress and in identifying any areas where they require further support. This enables her to support practitioners in planning for each child and ensuring that all children continue to make good progress.

Practitioners are experienced in working in partnership with other professionals and have developed a good understanding of the help they offer. This supports them in seeking any further help and support when required for children and their families. Practitioners share information with other providers caring for children. For example, they use 'setting to setting' books to exchange information about care and routines, assessment, planning and progress. This enables all key persons to work together to promote children's welfare and development. The setting's good partnership working with parents ensures that parents are kept informed of their child's progress. Parents report that staff and the setting are fantastic. They state that their children love attending and are always happy and settle with ease. They appreciate and value the communication systems in place, which includes daily discussions, newsletters and progress reports. An electronic mailing system is in the early stage of development and the use of other electronic media sources are under consideration.

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	EY274993
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	860885
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	68
Name of provider	Rascals Playgroup (Whitehaven) Committee
Date of previous inspection	15/11/2011
Telephone number	01946 591 373

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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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