

Ashington Minors

Back Sycamore Street, ASHINGTON, Northumberland, NE63 0AH

Inspection date	03/12/2014
Previous inspection date	04/12/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	4
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		3
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Children's safety is compromised because unauthorised persons can enter the nursery without being challenged, specifically when other adults are leaving the building.
- The deployment of managers, key persons and the organisation of rooms and grouping of children are not fully effective in promoting children's welfare and learning.
- Children are not fully supported during their arrival times, as the room used is not sufficiently welcoming or resourced.
- Managers and staff do not ensure that children have suitable waterproof clothing available to enable them to explore and learn effectively in the outdoors in winter.
- Staff in the pre-school room do not fully support children's independence by encouraging them to serve themselves or sit with them at lunchtime to further support their self-help skills.
- Parents are not always sure of who their child's key person is and staff are not always aware of who children's key person is within their group. This does not fully consider the emotional impact on children or fully support their well-being.

It has the following strengths

- Staff are caring and attentive and demonstrate a genuine interest in the children. Therefore, children form close bonds with staff and make appropriate progress in their learning.

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 had a tour of the premises and observed activities in the four main rooms and the outdoor environment.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke to staff, key persons and children at appropriate times during the inspection.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager and the deputy manager.
- The inspector looked at a sample of children's learning journals, daily diaries, and planning documentation.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children and the provider's focussed improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.

Inspector

Shirley Peart

Full report

Information about the setting

Ashington Minors was registered in 2007 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It operates from four main rooms within purpose built premises in the town of Ashington, Northumberland and is managed by two private individuals. There are two enclosed areas available for outdoor play. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. The nursery employs 15 members of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member holds a level 5 qualification, two hold level 4 and 12 hold a level 3 qualification. The nursery opens Monday to Friday, all year round except on bank holidays and for a week at Christmas. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. The nursery also has a before and after school provision and a wrap-around service for children who attend various nurseries and schools in the area. There are currently 134 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- ensure the safety of children by making sure that the main nursery door is always secure and monitored, so that no unauthorised persons can enter freely, specifically at busy times during the day.
- ensure that the deployment of managers and key persons and the organisation of rooms and grouping of children, specifically for two-year-olds, effectively promotes children's care, learning and welfare needs.

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

- enhance the arrival procedures, by ensuring that key persons are available to consistently support children and ensure that the out-of-school room is sufficiently welcoming and resourced when young children use it
- have suitable clothing available for children, such as waterproof boots or coats, so that they can explore the outside gardens and grassed areas comfortably, to further enhance their learning in the outdoors
- enhance pre-school children's independence by encouraging them to serve themselves and ensure that staff sit with them at lunchtime to further support their self-help skills
- strengthen engagement with parents further, by ensuring that all parents and staff know who children's key persons are in their group.

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

The staff have an appropriate understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children make suitable progress. The planning across the nursery is largely built around the general ages and stages of children's development and themes, such as Christmas. This means that planning does not always meet children's individual learning needs or interests. However, the management team and staff are aware of this and are currently working on improving their planning systems to make this more individualised. A range of suitable activities are on offer. However, some art and craft activities tend to be focussed on a finished product rather than developing children's creativity. For example, pre-designed templates by adults, such

as snowmen, calendars and baubles, do not always promote children's individuality, thoughts and ideas. However, staff are aware that children need lots of choice and do give them some encouragement to paint and use glitter freely. In general the nursery is suitably resourced and some new equipment, such as the large wooden kitchen in the two-year-old room, provides more imaginary play opportunities for children. The pre-school room is inviting and spacious and provides suitable areas for children to enjoy their play and learn skills across the seven areas of learning. For example, there is a sand pit with shells and diggers, a computer area, quiet story corner, role play area and creative areas available.

Staff support children's learning during their play through appropriate teaching. For example, staff that care for two-year-olds are enthusiastic and genuinely interested in the children. They initiate lively dancing activities to action songs and children use musical instruments enthusiastically. During drawing activities staff encourage younger pre-school children to draw circles and hold pencils correctly. When children play with large plastic blocks, staff are down at their level and encourage them to count in context to see how many they have. They ask children to compare the height of their towers to how tall they are and support them to recognise and name colours. They ask children open-ended questions, such as 'How tall is it and how many do you have?' This promotes children's early mathematical skills appropriately and encourages them to think and respond. This also supports their progress to the next stage of their learning and to be ready to move into the pre-school room. Staff, caring for babies, are sensitive and dedicated. They organise the baby room well and use the outdoors regularly, which meets the individual needs and ages and stages of the children attending. This means that toddlers have lots of opportunities to develop skills, such as walking, running, pushing, pulling and control, as they use sit-and-ride toys, chunky chalks and pens competently. Consequently, they make appropriate progress in the prime areas of learning.

Staff record regular observations they make of children's learning and track their progress against relevant criteria. These observations help staff to identify if children are demonstrating typical development for their age or if there are any gaps in their learning. They also complete the required progress check for children between the ages of two and three years and provide summaries for parents. Staff understand the importance of working in partnerships with parents. For example, they know it is crucial that they gain parents feedback on the children's learning. Therefore, staff seek to gain parents' views on what children enjoy doing at home, as they share the children's observations in their individual learning journals and regularly ask for parents' comments. Staff have recently introduced Barnaby Bear, who can go home with children. This encourages parents to talk about their children's experiences at home. A staff member working with two-year-olds has recently introduced parent-and-child messy play sessions, to encourage more parental involvement in the nursery and in the children's learning. These approaches help to form suitable partnerships and engagement with parents and continuity in children's learning.

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

Staff ensure that children are safe when they move from the indoors to the outside and children know the routine as they line-up carefully. This helps children to develop an

awareness of how to keep themselves safe. Staff are also vigilant when someone other than a parent comes to collect a child and they check out authorisation before children are allowed to leave. However, the main nursery door is not always secure as the inspector gained entry without being challenged. Some children are considerably upset on arrival and they are initially looked after all together in the main out-of-school room, along with children who are going to school. The room is not sufficiently welcoming or resourced to enable young children to feel secure, settled and interested in what is on offer. For example, a few dolls, a dolls house and small plastic bricks, do not inspire the children to enter the room. However, staff are caring and verbally welcome children and parents. They give children lots of natural cuddles to help them feel comfortable and safe, which meet their emotional needs appropriately.

Children play in the outdoor area regularly throughout the day so that they get plenty of fresh air and physical exercise. Staff, caring for the toddlers and two-year-olds, tend to use the paved area for bikes, scooters and other wheeled toys in the winter, rather than the newly developed grassed and garden areas. This is because the staff do not make appropriate arrangements with parents or organise alternative arrangements in the pre-school. As a result, children do not generally have suitable clothing available, such as waterproof boots or coats, so that they can explore these areas comfortably. This does not fully promote children's learning in the outdoors. Pre-school children enjoy outdoor play. They are well supported as they manage to put on their own shoes and fasten their own coats. They are appropriately challenged, as staff encourage them to climb up apparatus and they show their enthusiasm as they excitedly show adults the ice they found in the water trough. This means that children make satisfactory progress in their physical, personal and social development and gain an awareness of the effects of weather and seasons. Children enjoy healthy, freshly cooked meals on the premises, such as pasta bolognaise and garlic bread. The children sit together in small groups and babies are fed face-to-face by staff with lots of interaction as they are strapped safely into high chairs. However, staff in the pre-school room do not fully support children's independence by encouraging them to serve themselves or sit with them at lunchtime to further support their self-help skills. Staff ensure that they monitor children's toileting routines sensitively. For example, they regularly check and change children's nappies and give children lots of enthusiastic, positive praise and stickers when they successfully use the potties when they are toilet training. This promotes children's self-care and hygiene routines successfully.

Staff manage children's behaviour well. They deal with children's squabbles and disagreements in a positive way. They get down to the children's level, explain why their behaviour may not be acceptable and encourage them to say sorry. Even the youngest children repeat staffs' words when they say, 'kind hands,' knowing that this means they have not got to hit out at others. This helps children to learn to consider each other's needs from a young age. Staff are caring and demonstrate a genuine interest in the children, which helps to support their emotional well-being. They ensure that children are ready to move on to their next room through discussions with parents and by noting the children's individual development stages and needs. They manage this well as the children's key person goes with them for short settling-in visits until they are ready to cope on their own.

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

The safety and well-being of children is compromised because the main nursery entrance door is not monitored sufficiently to ensure that unauthorised visitors are prevented from entering. There is a buzzer system in place and closed circuit television, so that staff can view who wishes to enter. However, the door is not manned sufficiently at busy times to ensure security as people can enter freely when others are leaving. The manager has a suitable understanding of child protection and appropriate written safeguarding policies are in place, which are shared with staff. The manager is well-aware of when to make a referral or to seek advice. Consequently, children are appropriately safeguarded. The manager and deputy have a sound understanding of the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, systems are not yet fully embedded to ensure that children's individual learning needs, care and welfare are sufficiently monitored. Planning and the organisation and deployment of managers and key persons are not fully effective in promoting children's learning. For example, as the numbers of younger children attending increases, the managers have not considered how to regroup children or deploy staff to meet the children's individual care and learning needs. Therefore, two-year-olds spend time in two different rooms but there is no clear decision on how children should be accommodated or how the out-of-school room should be set up to best meet the needs of the younger children when this is used. The manager and deputy also spend a substantial amount of time completing office duties, collecting and dropping off children for wrap-around care or preparing breakfast and snacks, which takes them away from direct practice with the children and staff. This means that staff do not have consistent role models to help them enhance their practice further.

The management team are committed and have worked hard over the years to improve the nursery as they act on actions and recommendations from previous inspections. They have developed partnerships with parents further and this is ongoing. They have improved the outdoor areas and have a clear, focussed improvement plan in place. This enables them to identify priorities with the aim of developing the nursery. Staff have regular appraisals, supervision and peer observations are carried out. This helps the staff team to appropriately identify their learning and training needs to further improve the provision for the children.

Key persons are assigned to each child. However, parents are not always sure of who their child's key person is and staff do not always know the name of the children's key person within their group. Consequently, the system is not sufficiently robust to ensure that each child's individual emotional and learning needs are met and partnerships with parents are strengthened further. However, overall staff and managers work hard to engage with parents. For example, managers have begun to send out newsletters and staff encourage parents to comment in the children's learning journals. They have also recently started to invite parents in for stay-and-play sessions with their children. Parents comment that their children are making good progress in their personal and social development, such as interacting with others and with toilet training. They also state that they like the nursery and that the staff are friendly. Managers and staff are well aware of how to work with other professionals if children need early intervention, such as speech and language

support. They also work well with nursery and school staff when children attend other settings and pass on relevant information. This helps to provide appropriate continuity and coherence for children's learning.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- The registered person must ensure that no one can enter the premises without the knowledge of a person who is caring for children on the premises (compulsory part of the Childcare Register)
- The registered person must ensure that no one can enter the premises without the knowledge of a person who is caring for children on the premises (voluntary part of the Childcare Register)

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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	EY346062
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	962823
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	66
Number of children on roll	134
Name of provider	Ashington Minors Ltd
Date of previous inspection	04/12/2013
Telephone number	01670 858887

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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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Store St
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M1 2WD

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