

Muddy Puddles

Slaley First School, Slaley, HEXHAM, Northumberland, NE47 0AA

Inspection date	17/12/2014
Previous inspection date	17/01/2014

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		4
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		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Staff do not use assessment information effectively to plan experiences and opportunities that reflect children's stage of development and support their next steps in learning. As a result, children are not sufficiently supported in their development, so that they make the best possible progress.
- Staff do not track children's ongoing progress, which means that gaps in their learning and development are not identified.
- Arrangements for performance management do not adequately focus on assessing staff practice to improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning.
- Children have few opportunities to further develop their skills in using information and communication technology.

It has the following strengths

- Staff have established appropriate partnerships with parents and local primary schools to ensure children's individual needs are met and their future moves are supported.
- Children are provided with a safe and secure environment as staff have a clear knowledge and understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The key-person system helps children form secure attachments and develop positive relationships, which promotes their emotional well-being. Therefore, children are comfortable and confident in their surroundings.

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 compulsory part 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 deputy manager.
- The inspector observed play and learning opportunities for the children and spoke to staff members in the nursery room.
- The inspector carried out an interview with the deputy manager and looked at and discussed a range of policies and procedures.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualifications of staff working with children and the nursery's improvement plans.
- 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

Muddy Puddles was registered in 2013 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. It is privately owned and managed. The nursery operates from a unit within the grounds of Slaley First School in Slaley, Northumberland. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The nursery employs four members of childcare staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The nursery opens Tuesday to Friday, all year round. Sessions are from 7.30am until 6pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and from 7.30am until 1pm on Fridays. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 28 children on roll, 22 of whom are in the early years age group. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- use the information gained from observations to plan experiences and opportunities, which support children's stage of development and promote the next steps in their learning to help them to make the best possible progress
- implement monitoring systems for tracking children's ongoing progress to ensure any gaps in their learning and development are quickly identified, in order to access intervention where required
- develop performance management systems to ensure appraisals and supervisions assess the effectiveness of staff practice and provide the necessary support needed to strengthen the quality of teaching and learning.

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

- extend opportunities for children to further develop their skills in using information and communication technology, for example, by providing access to computers and mechanical toys.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff do not ensure that children make good progress as they are not using observation, assessment and planning effectively. They provide children with a mixture of adult-led and

child-initiated activities based on their individual interests. This means that children are mainly engaged and motivated in their play as they participate in an appropriate variety of activities to cover all seven areas of learning. As a result, children make some progress towards the early learning goals. Staff complete some observations to recognise children's achievements and identify the next steps in their learning. However, this information is not used effectively to plan future learning experiences and opportunities. Therefore, children are not sufficiently supported to ensure they make the best possible progress. Staff understand their responsibility to complete the progress check for children between the ages of two and three years and to share this information with parents. However, staff do not track and monitor children's ongoing progress, which means that any gaps in their learning and development are not identified. In addition, this means that staff are unable to access additional support and intervention for children where required. These weaknesses in practice were also identified at the last inspection but have not been addressed.

The nursery is generally well resourced and children have access to a wide range of high quality toys, to enable them to make choices about their play. However, children have fewer opportunities to further develop their skills in using information and communication technology. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Staff interact well with children during their activities, engage in constant discussion and ask open-ended questions. This supports children's communication and language development. Children develop their creativity as staff provide them with opportunities to express their own ideas and thoughts. For example, children show concentration as they use a selection of materials to make Christmas cards and glitter pictures. Children's expressive arts and design skills are further promoted as they use their imagination and take part in role-play activities, where they play in the kitchen and take the dolls for walks in their pushchairs. Staff support children's mathematical development and talk about colours, shapes and sizes as they use different construction resources and complete jigsaw puzzles. Children sit happily with staff and enjoy listening to stories, which supports their developing interest of books and early reading skills. For example, children talk about the different animals and link this to a recent visit to the zoo. Children have suitable opportunities to develop their physical skills as they have access to several outdoor play areas and the school field. This enables them to be active, develop their coordination and to take appropriate risks. Consequently, children are starting to develop some necessary skills needed to prepare them for the next stage in their learning at school.

Parents are kept reasonably informed about their children's learning and development as staff provide verbal and written feedback on a daily basis. However, because children's progress is not effectively tracked, the quality of this feedback is not always good enough to alert parents to any areas where their child may need additional support. Staff encourage parents to regularly view their children's learning journey books and give comments and suggestions. Staff have established appropriate links with local primary schools as they share relevant information to support children with their future moves. For example, staff meet regularly with school teachers to discuss children's individual needs to ensure a consistent approach is established.

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

The nursery key-person system helps children to form secure attachments and develop positive relationships with each other and staff. The environment is warm, bright and welcoming, which promotes children's emotional well-being. As a result, children are comfortable and confident in their surroundings as they are clearly happy, settled and content. Staff understand the importance of meeting the individual care needs of children. For example, clear settling-in procedures enable staff and parents to share relevant information about children to support their move from home. This is further promoted as staff ensure children are emotionally prepared for change, when moving onto the next stage in their learning at school. They work closely with teachers to ensure children feel self-assured in their new environment.

Children are encouraged to be independent and manage their own personal needs. For example, children confidently access their own resources, initiate their own play and wash their own hands. This helps to promote children's self-esteem and enables them to develop appropriate self-care skills. There are clear hygiene practices in place, which ensures children start to develop an awareness of their own health and well-being. Staff provide children with a variety of nutritious and balanced meals and snacks to support their understanding of a healthy diet and lifestyle. Children have daily opportunities for outdoor play, exercise and fresh air to enable them to be physically active. The nursery provides weatherproof clothing to enable children to experience the outdoor environment at all times during the year. Staff also organise regular outings for children, such as visiting the local farm and going for walks around the local community. This enables children to explore different environments and gain an understanding of the wider world around them.

Staff appropriately manage children's behaviour as they use a calm and consistent manner to provide clear guidance and simple explanations. This ensures that children understand the boundaries and expectations within the nursery. As a result, children behave well as they play cooperatively with each other. Children receive regular praise and encouragement from staff, which makes them feel valued and respected. Staff talk about the importance of safety throughout children's activities to ensure they start to develop an understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, children take part in regular fire evacuations and recognise that they need to be careful when using a range of tools during creative play.

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

The deputy manager and staff understand their responsibility to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They have attended relevant training and have a clear understanding of the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about children in their care. There is a detailed range of written policies and procedures in place to protect children's welfare. Written risk assessments are also completed to ensure the indoor and outdoor environments are safe and secure for children. Recruitment procedures for induction, vetting and assessing the suitability of staff are in place. Staff are deployed appropriately within the nursery and ratios are

consistently met to maintain children's safety and well-being. Therefore, children are well protected.

Staff work together to monitor and evaluate the educational programmes to ensure that all areas of learning are appropriately covered throughout children's activities. However, there are still some inconsistencies in meeting the learning and development requirements as staff do not effectively plan for children's next steps or track their ongoing progress. Consequently, children do not yet make good progress. Performance management systems are in place as staff receive annual appraisals and regular supervisions. However, these do not adequately focus on assessing staff practice and do not provide the necessary support needed for staff to strengthen the quality of teaching and learning. Staff do have opportunities to further their knowledge, understanding and skills by attending training courses and events. For example, the deputy manager has recently attended a seminar with other professionals to share ideas and discuss best practice. Self-evaluation is in place and staff develop improvement plans to support this process. Some of the recommendations from the last inspection have been addressed. However, further weaknesses in practice have not been identified. Also, an action raised at the last inspection relating to children's learning and development has not been suitably addressed. This shows a poor capacity to improve.

Partnerships with parents are established as staff work closely with them to share relevant information about children to meet their individual needs. Parents receive daily communication and have access to a selection of display boards within the nursery to keep them informed. Parents make comments, such as 'Staff are brilliant and very friendly, communication between us is good' and 'My child enjoys attending the nursery and I am happy that she receives good care'. Staff have developed links with the local authority, other professionals and local primary schools as they understand the importance of working in partnership to further support children in their learning and development.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory 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. 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	EY466252
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	962990
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	10
Number of children on roll	28
Name of provider	Jessica Janet Bell
Date of previous inspection	17/01/2014
Telephone number	07983 336047

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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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