

University of Cumbria Pre-School Centre (Lancaster)

Bowerham Road, Lancaster, Lancashire, LA1 3JD

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Inspection date | 08/12/2014 |
| Previous inspection date | 30/11/2009 |

| | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|
| The quality and standards of the early years provision | This inspection: | 2 |
| | Previous inspection: | 1 |
| 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 | | 1 |
| 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

- Children engage in a range of experiences in a well-resourced, stimulating and welcoming learning environment, both indoors and outside. As a result, children's emotional well-being and overall development are well supported.
- Children have good opportunities to make safe and independent choices in their play. Therefore, they are active and make good progress in their learning.
- The needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well met because staff develop effective partnerships with parents and other professionals. Children have continuity in their care and learning so they make good progress.
- Staff understand the safeguarding and welfare requirements well, which means they can respond promptly to any concerns and keep children safe.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff sometimes miss opportunities to share ideas with parents to enable them to support their children's learning at home.
- Information about good practice, gained from staff observations of each other's work, is not yet used entirely effectively to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently of a very high standard, so that children benefit from even more highly stimulating and motivating learning experiences.

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 activities in the indoor and outdoor learning environment.
- The inspector conducted one joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the manager of the provision and spoke to staff throughout the inspection when appropriate.
- The inspector looked at planning documentation and children's assessment records.
- The inspector checked evidence of staff qualifications and suitability to work with children and the provider's evidence of self-evaluation.
- The inspector took account of parents' and carers' views, spoken to during the inspection.

Inspector

Emma McKeown

Full report

Information about the setting

University of Cumbria Pre-School Centre (Lancaster) was registered in 1990 on the Early Years register. It is situated within the university campus in Lancaster, and is privately owned and managed. The pre-school serves the local area and is accessible to all children. It operates from four rooms and there are two enclosed areas available for outdoor play. The pre-school employs 21 members of childcare staff. Of these, 20 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including three with Early Years Professional Status or Qualified Teacher Status. The pre-school opens Monday to Friday for 48 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 8.30am until 5.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 108 children attending who are in the early years age group. The pre-school 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 and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The pre-school is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association and is working towards the Lancashire Quality Award.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance systems for sharing and using the knowledge and insights, gained from observations that staff and managers make of practice throughout the pre-school, to promote even higher levels of quality of teaching
- develop further the information given to parents to assist them in supporting and extending children's learning at home.

Inspection judgements

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

The quality of teaching is very good and on occasion, outstanding. Children are supported in making good progress in their learning, given their starting points. This is because staff accurately identify children's skills and plan for the next steps in their learning and development effectively. Children are encouraged to make independent choices through a range of interesting and challenging activities. Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through an appropriate mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. All staff respond well to children's emerging needs and interests and guide their development through positive interaction. For example, as children play with wooden bricks in the sand tray they are encouraged to talk about what they are building. Staff encourage children to use their problem-solving skills to determine how to make sure the bricks stand up or how long to make the walls. Young children enjoy playing in the water tray and are fascinated as they watch how water pours

differently through funnels and watering-cans. Children thoroughly enjoy the time they spend at the pre-school and are excited and motivated to learn. Consequently, children make good progress in their learning and development and are acquiring the skills and attitudes they need for their future learning and the eventual move to school.

Children learn to be confident communicators. Staff support language development by being at children's level, listening carefully to children and repeating unclear speech. In this way all children, including those with English as an additional language, learn to communicate well with others. Staff provide children with a wide range of interesting writing materials and children enjoy making marks to help them develop early writing skills. For example, they are encouraged to consider what they might write on the envelope as they send letters to Santa. Children learn about numbers, shapes and measures through play opportunities around the pre-school. For example, staff encourage children to count as they roll plastic balls down a ramp and catch them in a bucket. The development of key skills in the personal, social and emotional aspects of children's learning is supported through well-planned activities. As a result, children develop good friendships and learn to play cooperatively together. For example, as children play a game together they patiently take turns and enthusiastically encourage their friends when they correctly identify the animal noises. Children are very physically able and have a wide range of activities to develop these skills. Children use ride-on toys in the outdoor environment and enjoy painting and using scissors indoors.

The key persons complete ongoing observations of children to assess their stage of development and to plan for their next steps in learning. These are shared effectively across the pre-school so that all staff have good knowledge of every child's progress. Information is regularly shared with parents through a variety of effective methods, including daily verbal communication, communication diaries and parents' meetings. Parents are encouraged to share learning from home and staff use this information to support children's progress in pre-school effectively. However, information shared with parents does not yet consistently include ideas about how they can help support their children's learning at home. Advice from professionals involved with children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used by key persons to inform their individual planning. This helps key persons ensure that children make consistent progress in the areas where they need extra support. Key persons complete the required progress check for children between the ages of two and three years. This helps to support children's progress or identify if there are any concerns so that further support can be put in place.

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

The processes to help children to settle into the pre-school are highly effective. Parents feel very welcome to visit at any time. There are strong relationships between the children, parents and their key person. Furthermore, parents comment that they feel very comfortable in working with all staff in their child's room. Staff understand the importance of monitoring children's well-being to ensure they are able to respond to any issues, especially when children first start to attend. Children enjoy warm interactions with the staff who respond quickly to their needs. This means children feel emotionally secure and

are ready to explore and learn from the very start. Where children are identified as having special educational and/or disabilities, the help and advice of other professionals is sought to ensure their well-being is maintained and their needs are met. Staff show high levels of skill in working with children with a range of complex physical disabilities and special educational needs. This means parents are very confident that their child will be safe and well cared for. They praise staff for treating their child like all the other children and minimising differences created by their condition.

There is highly effective support for children as they move between rooms in the pre-school when the time is right for them and their parents. Children make regular visits to their new room in the weeks before they move. This ensures they are well prepared and staff have had time to get to know the children. Older children are prepared for moving on to school during their time at the pre-school, as they develop their independence. Staff ensure all schools that children move to receive invitations to visit the pre-school. Children's behaviour is very good. Staff help children to think about other people's feelings and they learn to negotiate and share equipment with their friends. The atmosphere is warm and cooperative.

All children develop healthy lifestyles as they are able to enjoy and explore the outdoor learning environment. They have ample opportunity to enjoy exercise in the fresh air, including trips to the local park. This ensures children develop an attitude that exercising outside is a normal activity for any time of the year. Children's dietary needs are met through the provision of freshly prepared meals and snacks. Staff are very aware of children with food allergies and robust processes are in place to ensure children are kept safe. Toddlers and pre-school children develop self-help skills as they serve themselves their snack. All children are encouraged to develop their ability to manage their hygiene needs, such as washing their hands before meals. The layout of the rooms allow children to make independent choices from a range of equipment from low-level storage. Children are encouraged to keep themselves safe through discussions and activities, for example, as staff remind children to take care as they climb on equipment.

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

The managers demonstrate very good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and of ensuring the pre-school is effectively organised. Rigorous security procedures ensure the safety of children is highly prioritised throughout the day. Risk assessments are thorough and reviewed regularly and, consequently, children are cared for in a safe environment. There are robust safe recruitment systems in place to ensure that children are always cared for by suitable adults. The induction procedure ensures new staff are aware of the pre-school's policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding practices. A mentor system is used throughout the pre-school to support new members of staff during their induction period. Staff are aware of, and comply with, the safeguarding policy, which contains detailed procedures to follow should staff identify any concerns with children and in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. There are clear restrictions on the

use of mobile phones within the pre-school, which staff understand and adhere to. Staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications and access training to further enhance their good practice. Legally required records for children's welfare are accurately maintained. As a result, parents feel confident their child is safe at all times.

The management team demonstrates a strong commitment to reflective self-evaluation. Recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed and areas for further improvements have been identified, for example, encouraging children to reflect on their own learning. This demonstrates a good commitment to continuous improvement. Rigorous systems are in place to monitor the effectiveness of the educational programmes through tracking children's progress. This means that gaps in learning are quickly identified and strategies are implemented to narrow the gap. Staff are regularly observed by the management team and each other, which helps to identify strengths and weaknesses of staff practice. However, there is scope to further improve the quality of teaching by extending the use of the manager's and staff's observations and evaluations of practice and opportunities for staff to share their knowledge and teaching skills throughout the pre-school. This will ensure opportunities to support children's learning are further enhanced through even more highly stimulating and challenging activities. The management team recognises the importance of continuous professional development and relevant training is provided for all staff to improve their already good knowledge and skills. Regular evaluation of weekly planning ensures activities are planned to meet the individual needs of children. This ensures children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Information is gathered regularly from parents to help inform the rigorous assessment systems, which effectively monitor children's progress from their starting points.

Effective partnerships between the pre-school, parents and other professionals ensure that children's needs are quickly identified and well-met. These partnerships have resulted in the sharing of accurate information about the children and a cooperative response in successfully supporting all children to achieve. Parents comment on the positive learning experiences their children have enjoyed at the pre-school. The pre-school is committed to working in partnership with parents to ensure they are fully involved in their child's learning and aware of their child's achievements. The pre-school ensures families who speak English as an additional language are kept fully informed of their child's progress. Effective partnerships with other professionals ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from consistent, relevant and targeted support. This ensures the pre-school can fully support parents through the referral and assessment procedures. The effective partnership between the pre-school and the local primary schools ensures children are well prepared for moving on to school when the time comes.

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 | 310284 |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 855244 |
| Type of provision | |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 0 - 8 |
| Total number of places | 56 |
| Number of children on roll | 108 |
| Name of provider | Smart Start Catterall Ltd |
| Date of previous inspection | 30/11/2009 |
| Telephone number | 01524 590893 |

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance '*Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

