

Kirk Merrington Pre-School

Blue House Estate, Kirk Merrington, SPENNYMOOR, County Durham, DL16 7JD

Inspection date

16/12/2014

Previous inspection date

25/02/2010

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

- Staff know the children very well. As a result, they provide a wide range of activities and resources, so that all children enjoy stimulating learning experiences to meet their needs and interests. Therefore, children's overall development is well supported.
- Staff form positive relationships with children so that attachments are strong and promote their emotional well-being. Therefore, children are happy, settled and comfortable in their surroundings.
- Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Robust policies, procedures and risk assessments are implemented, and as a result the children are safe and secure.
- Partnerships with parents and other professionals are successful and consequently children get the support they need.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not consistently take every opportunity to find a broad range of ways to enhance even further the good independence skills of all children.
- The management team does not always fully maximise the potential for the already good monitoring of educational programmes to identify further improvements, so that children make the very best possible progress in their learning and development.

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 observed activities both indoors and in the outside play area.
- The inspector looked at children's records, observation and assessment files, planning documentation and a selection of policies.
- The inspector spoke to the manager, staff and children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector checked evidence of the suitability and qualifications of staff working with children, the provider's self-evaluation form and priorities for improvement.
- The inspector took account of parents' and carers' views, spoken to on the day.
- The inspector conducted a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Cathryn Clarricoates

Full report

Information about the setting

Kirk Merrington Pre-School was registered in 1984 and is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It operates from two rooms within a single storey building, situated near the centre of the village. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The provision serves the local area of Spennymoor and is accessible to all children. It is managed by a voluntary committee of parents and staff. The pre-school offers sessions on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 9am to 3pm and on Thursday and Friday from 9am to 12.30pm, during term time. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting receives funding for the provision of free education for two-, three- and four-year old children. There are currently 23 children on roll, all of whom are in the early years age group. The five members of staff all hold appropriate level 3 qualifications. The pre-school 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:

- embed a wide range of strategies in everyday practice so that staff take every opportunity to support the development of children's independence skills even more effectively
- build on the already effective systems to monitor the educational programmes overall, in order to enhance the good progress children are making in their learning and development even further.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff use their secure knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure the quality of teaching is consistently good. They effectively promote the children's learning and development through a variety of child-initiated and adult-led activities across all the areas of learning. Parents provide a good range of information to help staff to plan to meet the needs and interests of the children from the start. As a result, all children make good progress overall from their starting points. Staff provide a varied range of fun and challenging learning experiences, which are adapted to meet the children's individual needs and interests. For example, staff use the outdoor environment for a wide range of learning experiences, including mark making and identifying numbers. The children show great excitement as they look for numbers that staff have written with chalk in the garden. Staff interact playfully with the children as they successfully hunt for, and identify, the numbers. Consequently, children become active and confident learners,

as they are motivated and engaged in their play. Staff complete regular observations and assessments of the children, in which they recognise each individual child's achievements and skills, identify their next steps in learning and inform future planning. They track the children's progress in their learning and development and ensure that children at risk of falling below their expected levels of development are identified quickly. Children's records are shared with parents, who, in turn, are actively encouraged to complete home observations, which they return to staff to inform their planning. Parents are well informed as staff provide them with verbal feedback at the end of each session, and written feedback is given through regular progress checks. Consequently, parents feel involved in their children's learning and development and their views are taken into account by staff.

Children are happy and settled in their environment, as they are cared for by the warm and welcoming staff team. Staff organise the environment well so that children have easy access to a broad range of stimulating activities and resources. Consequently, children confidently make independent choices within their play and try new experiences. Staff effectively promote the children's communication and language development as they ask relevant questions throughout their play. For example, while children are making crowns for their party, staff discuss the colours and shapes of the decorative materials and ask them how they will fit the crowns to their heads. As a result, children are becoming confident communicators and are learning to develop their critical thinking skills. Children begin to recognise their names from labels on their chairs and storage trays. Staff encourage children to write their names on their own artwork. This helps support early letter recognition and letter formation, in conjunction with phonic sessions. Staff promote mathematical development through daily activities, as children fill and empty a selection of containers during water and sand play and recognise numbers, shapes, colours and sizes as they play. The children have access to everyday technology as they begin to learn about computers. For example, they develop their hand-eye coordination as they use the computer mouse and keyboard. Consequently, children are effectively developing the skills required for the next stage of their learning. Children enjoy playing on the climbing frame and slide outside and take part in action songs activities indoors and as a result their physical development is promoted.

Staff work effectively with parents, external agencies and other professionals to support all children to promote their learning and development. The pre-school has developed very good relationships with the nearby school. Children and staff visit the school's library every week to choose books to bring back and share and this regularly enhances the variety of literature available to them. Overall children are developing the skills and attitudes they need for the next stages of the learning and the eventual move to school.

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

The staff team provides a warm, friendly and welcoming environment, which results in children feeling happy, settled and contented. They use the well-embedded key-person system effectively and this helps the children to form secure attachments. As a result, children quickly become familiar with the daily routines and develop close relationships with their carers. This promotes their overall development and emotional well-being. Staff

are sensitive and responsive to individual children's care needs, for example they offer comfort and cuddles when children are tired or upset. They make changes to routines to support children to settle quickly. For example, each key person sits with a small group of children, at the start of the session, to sing welcoming songs and talk about displays which include photographs of the children and their families. This helps children to feel welcome and valued. Parents spoken to at the time of the inspection were very positive about how well their children are supported to settle in and complimentary about the care children receive every day. They comment that their children always have fun during their time at the provision. Parents attend parent open events to discuss their child's well-being and progress. As a result, parents are kept well informed about all aspects of their child's care, learning and development and recognise how well staff support children for the move to the next stage in their learning at school. The staff and children attend special events at the school, for example the Christmas play, and as a result children are well-prepared emotionally for their move to school.

Staff encourage the children to be independent learners through their play activities and daily routines, for example when children choose from accessible resources, wash their hands and serve their own food at meal times. However, there is scope for staff to broaden the range of opportunities for children to practise their independence skills, for example by consistently reminding them to tidy up toys when they have finished playing with them. Staff implement good hygiene practices, which ensure the children start to develop an awareness of their own health and well-being. The children are provided with a variety of healthy snacks to develop their understanding of a healthy diet and lifestyle. They bring their packed lunches from home to enjoy in a sociable atmosphere at the pre-school, while they chat with staff, who sit at the children's level. Fresh drinking water is available for the children at all times throughout the session. Staff promote children's good health with daily opportunities for outdoor play, exercise and fresh air to ensure they can be active and develop their physical skills.

Staff reinforce appropriate and acceptable children's behaviour by using a consistent approach. They act as positive role models by promoting the use of good manners and reminding children to share and take turns during their play. Staff encourage children to listen carefully. They give children constant praise and encouragement, which develops their self-esteem and confidence. Consequently, children are learning how to be kind, polite and considerate to each other. Staff talk to the children about the importance of safety throughout their activities and encourage them to take appropriate risks. For example, they remind children to be careful when climbing large play equipment or when helping each other to build bridges with crates in the outdoor area. This ensures that children develop their own awareness and understanding of keeping themselves and others safe.

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

Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They understand their responsibilities to safeguard the

children in their care and know the procedures to follow if they have any concerns. A comprehensive range of written policies, procedures and risk assessments are implemented successfully to ensure the children are well protected. For example, staff ensure that the use of cameras and mobile phones is appropriate within the pre-school. Staff and children practise evacuation procedures regularly, so that children attending a variety of sessions are familiar with what to do in the event of an emergency. Children's safety is further promoted as staff complete daily health and safety checks on the premises and equipment to identify any potential hazards and minimise risk. Staff attend relevant training in safeguarding and first aid to keep their knowledge up to date, so that they are ready to deal with any concerns or incidents. There are robust systems in place for the recruitment, induction and vetting of staff to ensure that they are suitably trained, experienced and qualified. This helps to ensure that children's welfare is protected well. As a result, children are cared for within a safe and secure environment.

The management team, including the voluntary committee of parents and staff, is committed and enthusiastic. The team works together to provide a good quality of care and education for children and their families. Performance management within the nursery is effective; staff take part in regular supervisions and appraisals to support their professional development and identify training needs. Management support staff to attend training and to apply their learning to support improvements at the setting. For example, a member of staff has helped the team, as a result of knowledge gained at a recent literacy course, to extend the use of books and mark making by children indoors and outside. The management team has a secure knowledge and overview of the educational programmes, learning records and planning documentation. However, there is scope to further enhance the already good monitoring of the educational programmes, for example by continuing to improve processes to ensure that all children make the very best possible progress in their learning. The management team share a clear vision for the development and improvement of the pre-school environment and have developed action plans to support the self-evaluation process. They take into account the views of parents and children in developing these plans. The management team has ensured that recommendations from previous inspections have been implemented, for example staff now share information with parents, so that there is continuity of learning at home. This shows a commitment to continuous improvement of their service.

There are strong partnerships with parents to support the children in their learning and development. Parents benefit from daily communication at the start and end of each session, receive regular newsletters and have access to displays to keep them informed and involved in the pre-school. Staff have established strong links with other professionals to ensure that children's individual needs are met as a result of receiving appropriate intervention and support. The provision also works closely with the local authority and schools to successfully support children's good learning and development.

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. 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	314118
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	868185
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 17
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	23
Name of provider	Kirk Merrington Pre-school Committee
Date of previous inspection	25/02/2010
Telephone number	01388 811842

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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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