

Alnwick Children's Centre

Howling Lane, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 1DJ



Inspection date

10 July 2015

Previous inspection date

3 May 2012

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Good	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- The children are happy and enjoy their time at the playgroup. Staff observe and assess children's learning and the management team effectively track and monitor children's development. As a result, children are making good progress in relation to their starting points.
- Children establish a close bond and secure attachment with their key person. As a result, they feel safe and secure and their confidence and emotional well-being is promoted.
- Children are safeguarded because the staff team understand their role and responsibilities and are knowledgeable about the procedures they must follow if they were worried about any child in their care. As a result, children are protected.
- Partnerships with parents are good. The settling-in procedures meet the needs of the children attending and the sharing of information successfully involves parents in their children's learning.
- Leadership and management are good. The management and staff team are highly motivated in developing the playgroup in order to further improve the outcomes for children's learning and well-being.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Staff sometimes overlook opportunities to extend children's understanding of the other languages children use.
- There are occasions when challenging behaviour disrupts the larger group activities, as a result of this, children lose interest and become restless.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend opportunities for children to understand about other languages children use
- review the management of group activities to meet the concentration span and interests of the children attending.

Inspection activities

- The inspector completed a tour of the premises and observed children playing main playroom and the outdoor play area.
- The inspector held discussions with the manager, staff and children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation with the nominated person.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents 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 the 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

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

Children are well looked after by well-qualified staff. They are provided with a balanced programme of activities which are based on their interests and the next steps in their learning. Staff encourage children to make their own choices and decisions about their play from a wide range of resources and activities set out for them. Therefore, children are excited and enjoy what they do. They are inquisitive independent learners who on the whole are prepared well for their next move on to nursery. Staff skilfully observe and assess children's learning to produce summative progress reports reflecting the children's development with them and in the home. Staff extend children's communication and language through good questioning techniques which allow children to think for themselves and to respond in their own time. However, during the larger group activities some of the younger children lose interest and this causes disruption to the older children's learning.

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

Children are confident and settle easily on arrival. They establish a close bond and secure relationship with the staff, as a result, their emotional well-being is fostered. Children enjoy initial visits with their parents and during this time staff obtain all the information they require to ensure their needs are well met. Children are happy and for the most part are well behaved. Staff use positive behaviour methods to promote good behaviour. They constantly praise children's achievements which boosts their self-esteem. Children get plenty of fresh air and physical exercise. Staff teach children to follow good hygiene routines and develop their self-help skills. They also help children to learn how to keep themselves safe. Good partnerships are established with the local school. Staff also understand the importance of making links with other settings in order to complement the learning taking place.

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

The management and staff team demonstrate a good understanding of the safeguarding and welfare requirements. They ensure that all those associated with the playgroup are suitable to care for children. Staff's ongoing suitability is completed through regular supervision meetings and is used to identify further training for their continued professional development. The effective tracking and monitoring of children's progress are used well to identify any gaps in their development. As a result, help is obtained. The staff team work together to review their practice and to further improve the playgroup. Children with English as an additional language and special educational needs and/or disabilities are excellently well supported. However, opportunities to help children understand about other languages that children know are not always used to best advantage. Staff engage parents in their children's learning, provide information about the Early Years Foundation Stage and involve them in the running of the playgroup. As a result, parents feel involved, valued and respected.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY435776
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	853682
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	12
Number of children on roll	19
Name of provider	Northumberland County Council
Date of previous inspection	3 May 2012
Telephone number	01665 600896

Alnwick Children's Centre playgroup opened in 2011. It operates from within the children's centre in the grounds of a local school. Opening times are Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9am until 12 noon and 1pm until 4pm, term time only. The group receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-year-old children. In total, four staff work at the playgroup, two of whom hold relevant qualifications at level 4.

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