

# Inspection of Castle Kindergarten

Albany Teaching And Learning Centre, Albany Village Primary School, Washington,  
Tyne & Wear NE37 1UA

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Inspection date: 20 September 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not applicable

## **What is it like to attend this early years setting?**

### **The provision is good**

Managers and staff place children at the heart of everything they do. Staff are committed to meeting children's individual needs. Parents believe that staff go above and beyond to support them. Staff recognise the importance of working with families to support children effectively. One parent comments that the nursery has given them incredible support on a family level.

Children are happy and safe. They develop a strong bond with their key person and other members of staff. Babies follow their key person as they move around the baby room and snuggle in for a cuddle before going to sleep. Staff encourage children to take risks inside and outside, and help them understand how to use equipment safely. For example, children learn to lift their arms up as they slide down the slide they have created.

Overall, staff have high expectations for children. They swiftly identify what children need to learn next and plan activities to support their learning. Children settle quickly and embrace their learning. For example, two-year-old children look at a photograph of a spider and adapt their drawing accordingly. They demonstrate great pride in their achievements.

### **What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?**

- Staff work with parents effectively to meet the needs of all children. For example, staff in the baby room work with parents to develop effective routines for feeding babies.
- Children have lovely relationships with staff, especially their key person. For instance, two-year-old children laugh and giggle with their key person as they wait to go down the slide. Staff help children to share and take turns.
- Managers are ambitious and committed to driving improvements. Recent developments, such as strengthening teaching in mathematics, have had a good impact on children's learning. Managers focus professional development precisely to help them raise the quality of teaching even further.
- There is a strong relationship with parents. All parents are highly involved in their children's learning. There are very effective strategies in place, such as electronic communication, to enable parents and staff to share information about children's learning.
- Children enjoy their learning and concentrate intently on activities. Babies concentrate as they explore how to pick up cereal with spoons. Older children are highly engaged as they explore fruit and vegetables. They learn how they can cut fruit with knives. Children comment in delight at the smell of the leeks as they cut into them.
- The curriculum is well designed. Children enjoy choosing their own activities.

Staff observe children and use their interests to extend learning. For example, staff build on children's fascination in sliding as they help them to develop a slide outside. This helps children to become deeply engaged in activities. However, staff now need to think about how they can help children maintain high levels of involvement in group activities.

- Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in receipt of funding make high rates of progress. Staff target any funding well to help children catch up in their learning.
- Children are independent learners. They choose their own activities and begin to find solutions to everyday problems. Staff plan activities to help children to become more independent. For example, staff working with babies and toddlers plan activities to help them to use spoons. However, staff working with older children miss opportunities to help them develop even more independence. For example, they have not considered ways in which they can help older children to become even more independent at mealtimes.
- Children make good progress in their communication and language. Staff model language well and comment on what children are doing. For example, staff working with older children extend what they are saying. Staff working with babies use simple words and phrases.
- Staff work effectively with the on-site nursery and school. They have regular meetings to share observations and plan how they can help children to learn. This helps to develop a consistent approach to supporting children's learning.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a good understanding of how to protect children from harm. They know how to identify and report their concerns about children to keep them safe. All staff have a good understanding of wider safeguarding issues. Managers ensure that the environment is safe and well maintained. They act swiftly when any hazards are identified. Recruitment procedures are strong. Thorough checks and ongoing supervision help to ensure that all staff are suitable for their roles.

## **What does the setting need to do to improve?**

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

- help older children to develop even more independence
- review the organisation of group activities and help children to become more engaged.

## Setting details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY546316
<b>Local authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10103183
<b>Type of provision</b>	Childcare on non-domestic premises
<b>Registers</b>	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
<b>Day care type</b>	Full day care
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 to 3
<b>Total number of places</b>	48
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	92
<b>Name of registered person</b>	Castle Kindergarten Limited
<b>Registered person unique reference number</b>	RP546315
<b>Telephone number</b>	07725176123
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not applicable

## Information about this early years setting

Castle Kindergarten registered in 2017. The nursery employs 12 members of childcare staff. Of these, 11 hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, and one who holds qualified teacher status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday for 50 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.30am until 5.45pm Monday to Thursday, and from 7.30am to 5.30pm on Fridays. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

### Inspector

Elizabeth Fish

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The inspector completed a 'learning walk' with the manager of the nursery.
- The inspector spoke with staff and children during the inspection.
- The inspector completed a joint observation of an activity with the nursery manager.
- The inspector held a meeting with the nursery manager and provider. She looked at relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection and took account of their views.

We carried out this inspection 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.

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