

Inspection of Wetheral Playschool

Wetheral Village Community Hall, Wetheral, Carlisle CA4 8HE

Inspection date: 5 July 2021

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

The caring staff nurture children's emotional well-being. They know children very well and respond to their every need. For example, if children are upset on arrival due to a break away from the playschool because of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, staff swiftly offer opportunities for them to play and learn in the areas that they enjoy the most. This supports children to settle quickly and feel assured. Children are happy, comfortable and safe in the welcoming and appealing surroundings.

Staff promote children's learning and development well. They support children to develop confidence and inspire them to believe that 'they are capable of achieving anything'. Younger children enjoy socialising with their friends during routines, such as snack time. They maintain attention during stories and talk about the objects that they see within the pictures. Older children develop good early writing skills. They distinguish between the marks they make and form some recognisable letters when writing their name.

Younger children make their needs known. They seek support from the friendly staff when they need help. Children are caring and considerate to others. For example, when helping themselves to a drink of water, they kindly hand out cups to their friends who are waiting patiently. Older children are well mannered and polite. They willingly use phrases such as 'excuse me' to respectfully gain the attention of others.

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

- The manager values her dedicated staff team. She provides regular support to staff, to help enhance their good practice. Staff source a range of training that is relevant to the needs of the children attending. For example, staff know that some children are less confident after having a break away from the playschool due to COVID-19. They focus their training and teaching on raising children's self-esteem. Children engage in the new experiences that staff provide. They eagerly open a box 'to see something amazing' and adopt a high sense of self-worth. For example, when they see themselves in a mirror.
- Staff encourage children to explore the world around them. They alert children to living things that they see, such as a snail and engage them in conversation about this. Older children identify and describe special features, such as the shell. They observe the snail moving at a slow pace and express a desire for it to 'go faster'. This demonstrates children's good understanding of simple mathematical concepts.
- Partnerships with parents are good. Staff exchange information with parents to keep them informed about their children's learning and progress. They provide

fun challenges, such as scavenger hunts, to help parents to build on their children's learning at home. Parents report that staff are helping children to gain an awareness of letters and sounds, ahead of their move on to school. However, staff do not share detailed information with other settings that children attend, to further promote continuity in their care, learning and development.

- Children thoroughly enjoy listening to favourite stories, such as 'The Hungry Caterpillar'. Staff use these opportunities well to promote their good health. For example, they encourage children to try the healthy range of foods that are pictured in the story. This supports children to adopt healthy eating habits.
- Overall, staff provide a broad range of experiences that build on what children know and enjoy. For example, to expand on children's knowledge of what lives under the sea, staff challenge them to create sea creatures using dough. Children use good physical skills to mould the dough to create a desired effect. However, the level of challenge presented to children during some group experiences is, occasionally, too high. For example, during music sessions, staff ask children to choose their favourite songs and then play these in a language that they are not fully familiar with. This causes children to become a little confused and hinders their ability to join in and build on their skills gradually.
- The friendly staff welcome younger children to share information about themselves and their families. They engage in discussions with older children about events, such as an upcoming holiday. Children respond well to staff. They willingly express their thoughts for the future when talking about what they wish to be when they grow up. Children demonstrate respectful attitudes. They show their appreciation to those in the community that help them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager and staff are well trained. They have a good awareness of the indicators of abuse and know the procedures to follow to protect children's welfare. Staff are vigilant. For example, when sharing information on their social media page, they make sure that aspects such as children's names and pictures of their faces are not used. This helps to protect their identities. Staff take steps to minimise any risks. For example, when playing in the nearby field, staff use natural objects, such as the large trees, to inform children of their play boundaries. This helps to keep children safe.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen the links with other settings that children attend and share more in-depth information with them, to further promote continuity in children's care, learning and development

- support staff to make more precise links between children's stages of development and the challenges they present during group experiences, to help children to become more deeply involved and build on their skills gradually.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY552715
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10144613
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	38
Name of registered person	McDairmant, Sheila
Registered person unique reference number	RP552714
Telephone number	07531640868
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Wetheral Playschool registered in 2017 and operates from a room within Wetheral Village Community Hall. The playschool employs five members of childcare staff. Of these, three hold appropriate qualifications at level 3 and one holds level 2. The playschool is open Monday to Thursday from 9am to 3pm, and on Friday from 9am to 12.30pm, for 38 weeks of the year. An optional 8.30am 'early bird' start is offered each day and an occasional holiday club runs during the school holidays. The playschool provides funded early education for two- three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Charlotte Bowe

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The manager led the inspector on a learning walk to show how the playschool is organised. The manager shared information about what they intend children to learn.
- The inspector held discussions with the staff and children at appropriate times during the inspection. She held a meeting with the manager.
- A planned activity was jointly evaluated by the inspector and the manager.
- The inspector spoke to a number of parents and took account of their views.
- A sample of documents were viewed by the inspector. These included evidence of the suitability of staff, a record of staff qualifications and training, and policies and procedures.

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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