

Inspection of Higher Croft Children's Centre

Fishmoor Drive, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 3UY

Inspection date: 27 January 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education	Good
--------------------------	-------------

Behaviour and attitudes	Good
-------------------------	-------------

Personal development	Good
----------------------	-------------

Leadership and management	Good
---------------------------	-------------

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding
----------------------------------------------	-------------

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy, safe and secure in the nursery. They develop strong relationships with their key persons and the other staff who care for them. Children behave well. They develop a good understanding of routines and know when it is time to sit down for a story or snacks. Some children have missed important learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They benefit from the additional support that leaders provide, for example in developing children's routines and social interactions during play. Children become more aware of how to regulate their behaviour because of the support that staff give them.

Children focus well during activities and develop a positive attitude towards learning. They enjoy the range of books and stories that staff share with them. In preparation for school, children listen to a familiar story from a skilled teacher. Children remember well what they have been taught. For example, they remember the word 'walrus' from the story and they waddle like a penguin when they go to line up. Furthermore, all children join in and have a go at using sign language to express the feelings of the penguin in the story. This contributes to very strong outcomes for all children in their communication and language development.

The nursery's work for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is extremely strong. Staff implement highly effective early intervention strategies with different professionals. This leads to unique early interventions, such as targeted groups to support children's listening, attention and language skills. This means that children with SEND make significant progress in their learning and development.

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

- Leaders have planned an engaging curriculum which develops children's learning across different areas of learning. Staff incorporate children's different cultures in play to develop children's understanding of the world. This supports children to acquire essential skills for the future and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Staff have a clear understanding of what children already know and can do. They use this information to plan children's learning in logical steps. Pre-school children develop a secure understanding of how to count and recognise numbers from one to 10 and further. Staff ask children, 'We have three plates. If we add one more plate, how many will we have?' Children correctly respond four.
- Children understand the rules of the nursery and their behaviour is good. They are encouraged to be independent at an age-appropriate level. Toddlers engage with others as they put their coats on to go outside. Pre-school children use successful strategies to help regulate taking turns independently. This promotes

children's emotional health and resilience.

- Toddlers are keen to explore different textures, such as dough. They manipulate the dough in their hands, helping to develop strength in their fingers. However, sometimes staff introduce too many learning concepts and do not give children enough time to process questions and answer them. This delays children's development of building vocabulary and expressing their thoughts. Pre-school children welcomed the inspector into their play, saying, 'Look at the print on my dough.' This demonstrates the children's growing confidence and self-esteem.
- When staff talk to children, they get down to children's level, speak clearly and use the correct pronunciation to influence learning and behaviour. Occasionally, staff working with toddler-age children focus too intently on a single aspect of the activity they provide. For example, in the sand, staff follow children's lead and support children to build a sandcastle. However, staff do not help the children to extend their language and thinking skills further.
- Staff partnerships with parents and carers are good. Parents comment on the 'supportive staff' and value the guidance that staff give to them. For example, they appreciate the help from staff to potty train their children successfully and manage behaviour at home.
- Staff enjoy coming to work and feel supported by leaders. There are effective systems in place to help them manage their workload. This contributes to positive staff well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff attend safeguarding training to ensure that their knowledge is up to date. This ensures that staff have a clear understanding of how to safeguard children. For example, they are alert to the dangers of radicalisation and county lines. Staff understand the importance of taking prompt action to protect children. They know the procedures to follow to report any concerns they may have about a child in their care. Leaders and staff know how to respond to an allegation against a member of staff. This helps to protect children from harm. Leaders put in place effective procedures, indoors and outdoors, to make sure that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. They deploy staff effectively so that children are well supervised and cared for.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- focus more precisely on the implementation of planned activities to challenge and extend children's learning, particularly in the toddler room
- strengthen support, coaching and training opportunities for staff in the toddler room to raise the quality of teaching to the highest level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY268694
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10143942
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Sessional day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	60
Number of children on roll	33
Name of registered person	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Registered person unique reference number	RP518323
Telephone number	01254 267 920
Date of previous inspection	20 August 2013

Information about this early years setting

Higher Croft Children's Centre registered in 2004 and is located in Blackburn. It is one of eight children's centres registered with the local authority. The centre employs seven members of childcare staff, including the manager. Five members of staff hold appropriate early years childcare qualifications at level three and one has qualified teacher status. The nursery opens from 8.45am to 3.30pm, term time. The centre provides funded early years education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Maryam Chauhan

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 early years teacher and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector and the early years teacher completed a learning walk across all areas of the setting to understand how the early years provision and the curriculum are organised.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- Children spoke to the inspector throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke with staff at appropriate times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector held a meeting with senior leaders and the early years teacher. She reviewed relevant documentation and evidence of the suitability of staff working in the nursery.
- Parents shared their views on the setting with the inspector.

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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, 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 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022