

Inspection of Castle Nurseries at Shieldfield

8 Clarence Walk, Shieldfield, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 1AD

Inspection date: 5 April 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 Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Staff go out of their way to support children and their families. They have a strong partnership with a range of professionals. This helps staff to provide the necessary support to families of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff signpost parents to additional groups and resources for further support. Children are very happy in the nursery. Parents say that their children are 'full of joy and very happy'. Babies enjoy playing peekaboo with their key person. Older children enjoy cuddles from staff as they sit on their knee or snuggle in for stories.

Staff have high expectations for what children can achieve. Children generally develop good attitudes to their learning. For example, children in the pre-school room concentrate well as they listen to stories, or work in a craft corner cutting and sticking. Children behave well. Two-year-old children respond well when they are reminded to keep things in a tray. Children learn how to keep themselves safe. Older children use scissors safely and with control. Younger children learn how to use knives at mealtimes.

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

- The manager has clear plans in place to improve the nursery. For example, recent changes to the environment have generally helped children to become more involved in their play. The manager supports staff to help them develop their skills. The manager observes staff's practice, however, she does not always swiftly address all minor inconsistencies in practice.
- Babies thrive in a calm and nurturing environment. They have a very strong relationship with their key person. Staff think carefully about how they can support children's learning further. For example, they have sturdy tunnels to support children who are crawling and cruising. Staff celebrate children's achievements with children. For example, they demonstrate their delight as babies take their first steps, by clapping and cheering.
- Children enjoy a range of healthy meals. The cook ensures that children's meals are nutritious. She caters well for children's different dietary requirements. Staff talk to children about healthy meals and older children enjoy making food, such as fruit salads. Staff teach children about how they can care for their teeth. This helps children to learn how they can keep themselves healthy.
- Staff support children with SEND and those children who speak English as an additional language effectively. They know children well and have a clear understanding of how they can support children further. Staff act on any advice they receive and incorporate suggested actions into their day. During the inspection, children made very good progress in using simple phrases and clapping the syllables in words.

- Staff know children well and plan activities to support their learning further. For example, staff plan activities to help two-year-old children share their toys with each other. However, staff do not consistently take account of children's interests when planning activities. For example, staff do not plan enough activities to support children's fascinations, such as throwing. As a result, some children do not consistently demonstrate high levels of involvement.
- The manager uses funding effectively. Children in receipt of two-year-old funding make good progress. Staff support them well to develop their communication, physical and social skills. For example, children play alongside each other in the sand and sometimes share resources. Staff use funding for children with SEND to provide additional staff support. They also purchase resources to help children to regulate their emotions.
- Staff have worked hard to maintain a strong relationship with families despite the COVID-19 pandemic. However, occasionally, staff do not share or gather enough information from parents to ensure that children make the best possible progress. Staff encourage parents to continue to collect and drop off children at the door. Some parents comment that this face-to-face feedback is brief and they are unsure of how they can support their children at home. In addition, staff do not consistently find out about children's fascinations at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There are good procedures in place to keep children safe. For example, all doors into the garden and building are secure. Staff use the intercom to check who is there before opening the door. They greet visitors at the door. This ensures that no unauthorised visitors can enter the setting. The manager acts swiftly if staff identify any potential hazards. For example, staff have closed parts of the garden recently to keep children safe. The manager and staff have a good knowledge of safeguarding. They recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse, and act swiftly if they have concerns about a child in their care.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- strengthen monitoring to identify and address minor inconsistencies in teaching
- use children's interests more effectively when planning activities to strengthen their engagement and learning
- extend partnerships with parents and share even more information to raise children's learning to an even higher level.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY225329
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10229468
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 4
Total number of places	45
Number of children on roll	58
Name of registered person	Newcastle City Council
Registered person unique reference number	RP910108
Telephone number	07834549757
Date of previous inspection	18 November 2016

Information about this early years setting

Castle Nurseries at Shieldfield registered in 2002. It is situated in Newcastle upon Tyne. The nursery employs 10 members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above. The nursery opens for 51 weeks of the year from 8am until 6pm, Monday to Friday. It provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Elizabeth Fish

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 showed the inspector around the nursery. She discussed with the inspector how the curriculum and the experiences for children are planned. The inspector viewed the inside and outside space used by the nursery.
- The inspector observed the quality of education during activities and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The manager and the inspector evaluated an activity together.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the nursery's documents, including evidence of training and the suitability of staff.
- The manager explained how she manages the nursery and discussed safeguarding with the inspector.
- Parents spoke to the inspector to provide their views on the nursery.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff as part of the inspection.

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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