

Inspection of Big Hands Little Hands Nursery School

Centre Block, Prospect Business Park, Consett, Durham DH8 7PW

Inspection date:

1 August 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Not applicable

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision requires improvement

Children receive a warm welcome from staff when they arrive. They enthusiastically choose from a range of interesting activities in the bright and engaging playrooms. Babies squeal with excitement as they explore what happens when they roll wooden cars down a cardboard tube. Older children concentrate as they practise making marks on large sheets of paper. They chat to staff about what they are doing and are helped to recognise colours, shapes and letters. As a result, children are becoming confident and curious learners. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make good progress from their starting points. This is because of the high quality of interactions between staff and children. However, opportunities for children to learn outdoors are limited, as this area needs further development.

Supporting children's self-esteem and well-being is given a high priority by the nurturing staff. When children start attending, care is taken to consider the most appropriate person to become the child's key person. Children demonstrate strong attachments to all staff. Children are comforted with cuddles if they are upset. They are spoken to with respect and kindness. Children beam with pride when they are praised.

Parents are very pleased with the progress their children are making. They receive regular updates about their children's learning. They also welcome the support that staff provide, for example in relation to toilet training.

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

- Managers and staff have a good understanding of how to support children's learning. The curriculum is based around children's interests. Staff have a very good knowledge of individual children's stage of development. This ensures that children are helped to progress through carefully considered interactions, as they play. Partnerships have been developed with a range of professionals to help the nursery to try to access appropriate support for children with SEND.
- The development of children's speech and communication is very effective. Staff are excellent role models, speaking clearly and introducing new vocabulary as children play. Babies giggle as they listen to the voices of staff, who they talk to them through cardboard tubes. Staff understand the importance of giving babies time to make their own sounds.
- The playrooms inside have been set up with careful thought about how children learn. There is a strong emphasis on the use of natural resources. Children are thoroughly engaged as they make patterns using different pebbles and dried fruit. They take photos of their creations to share with their parents. The role-play area is being developed with a travel theme. This is to provide experiences

for children who are not able to go on holiday.

- In contrast, the outdoor area does not provide an engaging learning environment. Resources have not been well maintained. Toys have been left where children have dropped them on previous days. Black sacks of sand and compost have been left unattended. Rainwater has not been emptied from utensils. The youngest children rarely use the outdoor area. Instead, they are usually taken for walks in their buggies.
- On arrival, older children find their name on wooden hangers. They hang these on their pegs. Younger children use a picture to help them to find the right place to store their shoes. Children are given effective support when learning to use the toilet and wash their hands independently. However, at mealtimes, children are not consistently given opportunities to do things for themselves.
- Children generally behave very well. Effective strategies are used consistently if children struggle to regulate their behaviour. For example, when children start to kick a ball inside, the manager intervenes and effectively encourages them to gently roll the ball to each other. At times, daily routines do have an impact on children's behaviour and learning. For example, when children are thoroughly engaged in their play, they are taken for a routine nappy change. Children become restless when they must wait too long for their lunch to cool.
- Managers place a strong emphasis on the well-being of staff. As a new provision, the staff team is growing. Activities to encourage staff to get to know each other have taken place. They also access regular professional development opportunities. However, arrangements for the supervision of staff have not yet been fully put in place. As a result, staff may not always fully appreciate their responsibilities, such as in relation to daily checks on the premises.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager ensures staff have access to appropriate safeguarding training. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the signs that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They are alert to issues, such as children being able to access inappropriate content online at home. They are aware of the procedures to follow should they need to report any concerns. This includes knowing how to deal with allegations against members of staff. There are helpful lists of contact details for local safeguarding professionals on display throughout the nursery. Robust procedures are in place to ensure that staff suitability is regularly checked.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

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

- develop the outdoor area to enhance children's learning opportunities, including those for the youngest children

- strengthen procedures for the supervision of staff to ensure they fully understand their responsibilities in carrying out routine checks of the premises
- consider how daily routines can be better organised so that learning opportunities are maximised and children do not become restless
- provide more opportunities for children to develop their independence, especially at mealtimes.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2659528
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10248335
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	0 to 4
Total number of places	88
Number of children on roll	71
Name of registered person	Big Hands Little Hands Childcare Limited
Registered person unique reference number	RP901028
Telephone number	07745086793
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

Big Hands Little Hands Nursery School registered in 2021 and it situated in Consett, County Durham. The nursery operates Monday to Friday, for 51 weeks of the year. Opening hours are from 7.30am until 6.30pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. There are a total of 16 childcare staff. Of these, one holds qualified teacher status, one holds a relevant early years qualification at level 6, and 10 hold an appropriate qualification at level 3.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jan Batchelor

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.
- We carried out this inspection as a result of risk assessment, following information we received about the provider.
- The inspector viewed the provision and discussed the safety and suitability of the premises.
- The deputy manager and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation of an activity with the deputy manager.
- Parents shared their views of the nursery with the inspector.
- The manager provided the inspector with a sample of key documentation on request.

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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