

Inspection of Little Harwood Children's Centre

Robinson Street, Blackburn BB1 5PE

Inspection date: 12 October 2022

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

The children arrive excited and keen to learn. They confidently explore the stimulating, inviting and safe nursery environment. Teaching of all children is excellent, with ambitious next steps based on the children's unique needs. All children thrive, regardless of their starting point. They have a positive view of learning, and this helps prepare them for their next stage, including school.

A broad range of activities builds on what children already know. For example, when reading 'Dear Zoo', staff extend learning and build on the children's curiosity by using a range of props and excellent questioning. Children are encouraged to think and share their ideas. They shake with excitement when listening to favourite stories. Children and staff also delight in singing, reciting rhymes and dancing together. This ensures that children learn to listen well and develop a love of books.

Children's communication and language development are prioritised. Staff speak clearly and use pictures to help children communicate. New vocabulary is introduced and reinforced. All children benefit from the very high expectations set, including children with English as an additional language. They make excellent progress and many already use language fluently.

Staff model expectations, with children receiving lots of praise and emotional support. This raises self-esteem and children all delight in what they achieve. They take turns and offer support to their peers. For example, when making play dough, they work collectively and happily volunteer to switch seats, allowing others to join in. Children's behaviour is excellent.

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

- The curriculum reflects how well the staff know the children. It sensitively includes what the children have in common as well as celebrates diversity. Staff are aware of the importance of language as a strong foundation for future learning. Visual timetables, picture prompt cards and sign language support the spoken word. All children are valued, and many use a range of ways to communicate.
- Children are engrossed in their learning and make excellent progress. They practise mark making and emerging writing skills. Children draw pumpkins, print in sand and use chalk. They develop mathematical concepts. For example, when making their own play dough, children count, discuss size and estimate quantities. These engaging activities help all children to concentrate and problem solve with confidence.
- Leaders make excellent use of the facilities located within the children's centre.

Staff and families have developed strong partnerships with the agencies on site. This impacts hugely on all children, especially those with special education needs and/or disabilities, or from disadvantaged backgrounds. Trained staff use a range of screening tools to develop a deeper understanding of each child's needs. This early intervention supports all children in reaching their potential.

- Partnerships with parents are excellent. Parents highly recommend the nursery and find all staff very approachable. Discussions based on progress, including possible concerns, are handled sensitively. Staff aim to eliminate any barriers faced by parents and carers. Families attend regular 'stay and play' sessions and have access to shared resources, for example the on-site library, sensory room, story sacks, toilet-training packs and oral health items. Children all benefit greatly from such a united approach.
- Children are encouraged to make their own choices, pour drinks, collect plates, open packets and spread butter. They show consideration for each other. For example, a little girl perseveres, when assisting her friend in putting on her coat and hat. Children are independent and have an awareness of the needs of others.
- Children's behaviour is exemplary. They know what is expected of them and politely remind each other. For example, when sitting for a story, young children share with each other the rules to listening well. Staff are positive role models and their respect for one another is evident. There is a strong sense of belonging. Staff pick up on learning opportunities linked to emotions and feelings. For example, they discuss kindness and friendship when playing with animal puppets from the autumn table display. This helps children learn to effectively manage their feelings.
- Staff reported how they feel their well-being is high on the agenda. They have regular supervision meetings and are offered 'Tea and Talk' well-being sessions each month. Training days always begin with a healthy focus, such as Pilates, an aerobic session or a group walk. The range of training on offer is broad and balanced. Staff are also nominated for awards within the local authority in recognition of their hard work. The well-being of all children benefits from having such a valued and well-supported team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All three leaders on site have attended the 'designated safeguarding lead' training. There are robust procedures in place for recruitment and staff suitability. All staff access training linked to general and specific safeguarding topics. The team are all aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and know how to report any concerns. 'Prevent' duty is thoroughly understood and a lockdown procedure in place. The nursery is based within a secure children's centre. There are strict procedures for entry, and keypad access to each room. Staff carry out effective risk assessments in the indoor and outdoor environments at the start of each day. This helps keep children safe.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY336018
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10233319
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	100
Number of children on roll	114
Name of registered person	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Registered person unique reference number	RP518323
Telephone number	01254 506 910
Date of previous inspection	18 November 2016

Information about this early years setting

Little Harwood Children's Centre registered in 2007. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3 or above, including one staff member who holds qualified teacher status. The nursery opens from Monday to Friday, term time only. Sessions are from 8.40am until 11.40am and 12.20pm until 3.20pm. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector
Alice Apel

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the nursery received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the management team and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the setting.
- The senior staff and inspector had a learning walk and discussed the setting's intentions for the children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to parents and noted their views of the setting.
- The inspector viewed documentation including first-aid certificates, DBS and staff qualifications.
- The inspector did joint observations and evaluated them with the teacher.
- The inspector observed interactions between staff and children.
- The inspector observed and spoke to children, both indoors and out.
- The inspector spoke to staff about how the curriculum is implemented and the impact it has on the progress children make.

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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