

Inspection of Seaham Kindergarten

Convent Of Mercy, 1 Antrim Gardens, Seaham SR7 7BN

Inspection date: 1 June 2023

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

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

The nursery is a non-profit setting with any proceeds used to enhance experiences for children with additional needs. There is a very strong ethos of meeting the needs of children and their families.

Children are very happy and settled. There has recently been an influx of new children and staff to the setting that was very efficiently managed. Within a short period of time, children have established strong and secure bonds with the very caring and enthusiastic staff. Staff demonstrate that they know the children extremely well. Children also enjoy strong bonds with each other and make friends at the setting.

The curriculum is ambitious for every child, including rigorous procedures for children with additional needs. Staff are skilled at ensuring that all children have regular opportunities to develop their skills across all areas of learning. As a result, all children are making rapid progress in all areas of their learning and development. Children's emotional development is also really well supported. For example, there are carefully planned and individualised transition procedures to support children when they move to the next room within the nursery.

There is an incredibly strong staff team within the setting with a strong focus on mutual support and well-being. Staff also receive excellent support from a wider management team within the organisation. As a result, staff are very happy and confident in their role. This supports a very strong key-person system, which benefits all children.

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

- Staff are extremely passionate about the work they do and strive to ensure all children do well. They have high expectations for children's learning and behaviour. Children are very well behaved and have an excellent attitude towards learning. Even the youngest children are respectful of each other. For example, they patiently wait to take turns when walking across the balancing beam.
- Staff skilfully engage children in interesting and exciting learning experiences linked to their next steps for learning. For example, the younger children thoroughly enjoy role play in an 'ice-cream shop.' Staff extend the activity to promote children's physical development. They provide opportunities for children to scoop real ice cream into bowls or cones. The children persevere and concentrate to carefully pour on sprinkles. This helps to promote their hand-eye coordination.
- Staff take time to know what interests the children. For example, when children

show an interest in numbers and counting, staff play dominoes with them, which promotes their matching and counting skill. Children then apply what they have learned as they draw and make their own dominoes to play at home. They also carefully count and sort small, soft balls into different number groups.

- Children's personal development is a key priority within the setting. They enjoy a varied range of healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. Staff are excellent role models and are respectful towards the children. For example, staff ask the children when they are ready to have their nappy changed. There is also a strong and consistent focus on promoting children's language and communication skills, including through story times and engaging conversations.
- Children have lots of opportunities for problem-solving, which promotes their thinking skills, confidence and self-esteem. In addition, staff promote children's resilience by encouraging them to keep trying when things do not initially turn out as expected. For example, older children have several attempts at making slime. Staff encourage the children to think about what is going wrong. The children work out that they have added too much water, so try again. The children also watch a video and measure out ingredients. This promotes their listening and mathematical skills. It also helps to promote their knowledge and understanding of the world and how technology is used as a helpful tool.
- The setting works extremely well with other professionals, parents and carers. Staff ensure they keep parents regularly informed of their child's development and progress via an electronic app. However, parents also comment that staff take time to talk to them daily about their child. Parents are very welcome in the setting, and staff organise play sessions for parents to spend time in their child's designated room.
- There are effective monitoring and evaluation procedures in place to continuously assess and improve the provision and the outcomes for children. Parents, carers, staff and children are meaningfully involved and included in this process.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding children is a priority within the setting. The premises are clean, safe and secure. All staff have ongoing access to safeguarding and other training and development courses. Staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge and understanding of aspects that can affect a child's life and of how to put appropriate procedures in place to protect children. Children are also taught to keep themselves safe. Staff positively encourage children to take measured risks while promoting their large-muscle skills. For example, younger children attempt to walk across the balancing beam unaided, and older children have opportunities for climbing and jumping outdoors.

Setting details

Unique reference number	2699352
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10286341
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 8
Total number of places	90
Number of children on roll	80
Name of registered person	Seaham Kindergarten Limited
Registered person unique reference number	2699350
Telephone number	0191 5815487
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Information about this early years setting

The nursery registered in 2022 and is situated in the coastal town of Seaham. It operates all year round from 7.30am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, four members of staff hold an appropriate qualification at level 6, seven staff have a level 3 and one member of staff is currently working towards a qualification. The nursery provides early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children and those in receipt of early years pupil premium funding.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Elaine McDonnell

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 inspector observed the quality of teaching during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- Joint observations of planned indoor and outdoor activities were completed by the manager and inspector.
- The inspector held a discussion with manager in relation to the leadership and management of the nursery. She looked at relevant documentation, such as evidence of recruitment, staff's qualifications and their suitability to work with children.
- The inspector spoke to children to find out about their time at the setting.
- Staff spoke to the inspector during the inspection.
- The inspector obtained the views of parents and carers about their child's experiences at the setting.
- The special educational needs coordinator spoke to the inspector about how they support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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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